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THE Little Cardinal

OLIVE KATHARINE PARR

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THE LITTLE CARDINAL

THE CHILDREN'S CARDINAL

The REVIEW OF REVIEWS says:

It is refreshing to pass from the heated controversies over education to such a sentence as this, written concerning the chief sacerdotalist of them all:

"When a man really loves children, his love for them is so great as even to eclipse our own; his whole strength of intellect and heart—all his manly tenderness and chivalry towards the innocent and helpless—seem gathered into one great abiding love which enwraps and protects its fortunate object. Such a lover of children was the late Herbert Cardinal Vaughan."

This is the prelude to Miss O. K. Parr's beautiful tribute in **TEMPLE BAR** to "The Children's Cardinal," as she calls him. She tells how his love found expression in the Catholic Children's Crusade by which he sought to interest children in the rescue of waifs and strays . . . Miss Parr dwells on his fascinating ways with the little folk, even with the least. She has laid the public under obligation by recording this beautiful fact in the character of so stately a Prince of the Church.

THE
LITTLE CARDINAL

BY

OLIVE KATHARINE PARR, 1874

(Author of "Back Slum Idylls," "A Red Handed Saint,"
"My Heaven in Devon," etc., etc.)

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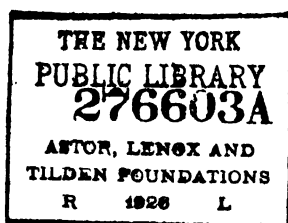
NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO
BENZIGER BROTHERS

Publishers of Benziger's Magazine

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To My Mother

IN MEMORY

OF

BYGONE YEARS OF WORK TOGETHER

IN THE DIOCESE OF

A Great Cardinal

TRANSFER FROM C. d.

OCT

1926

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OF

NEW YORK POST GRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL

In the alleys, in the squares,
 Begging, lying little rebels,
 In the noisy thoroughfares
 Struggling on with piteous trebles.

Elizabeth B. Browning.

IT was an early hour of a morning in mid-February, at the latter end of the nineteenth century, in the city of London; and, upon this particular morning, things looked more than usually uninviting in Golden Court. The smoke-blackened houses, like rows of lanky, over-grown children, all much too narrow for their height, peered disconsolately across at each other with bleared eyes, through an atmosphere so thickened with sooty vapour as to suggest that the lungs of Golden Court gave out coal smoke instead of the ordinary breath of life. Between these dejected houses was a narrow road, inch deep in a drab, slimy ooze, which appeared to have generously im-

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parted its hue to everything around and even above it; for a drab sky glowered wanly down upon the drab scene. The clothes of the inhabitants were of the same tint, and, in the case of the adults, so were their complexions. They looked as if the afore-mentioned ooze had even penetrated their veins, to circulate there instead of good red blood. Some of the children were fairly rosy, though the roses soon bloomed but languidly in such an atmosphere, which, however, did not affect the spirits of its inhalers. To these people, life itself was mostly a dingy drab; they had never known anything different. Hence, there was no repining, no "desire of the moth for the star." Their senses were mercifully undeveloped and uncultivated; eyes were accustomed from infancy to a neutral-tinted world; ears to harsh, monotonous sounds; nostrils to the odours of soot and mud. No charitable persons ever visited Golden Court with free country holiday tickets, or admissions to seaside homes of rest. The dwellers in the lanky houses had never been taken away into the magical country, with its sunlit, flower-starred fields, and its black,

silent, dew-laden nights, only to be returned, with quickened senses, to their dreary, smelling, noisy homes. So they were spared the sickening craving for rustling woods and sunny hillsides, and spared, too, the precious knowledge of the world as God made it. Ah, it is a moot point that, whether it is or is not an unmixed good to give to us mortals a knowledge of the unattainable.

But, wait; I am wrong. In Golden Court there *was* one tiny home whose inhabitants had known brighter days. There *were* eyes, noses, and ears shrinkingly sensitive to their surroundings, and hearts aching with the dull pain of hopeless resignation.

"Hark, there is the school bell. *Vite, mon enfant!* What will the dear lady say if her *bon garçon* is late? Ah, *ciel!* These muddy skies! In *la belle France* the nights are lighter than these English days. And this is almost March, when the twilights are lengthening out and the new buds breaking on the olive trees."

"Don't think of it, *ma mère*. It only makes you sorrowful. Some day, when we are rich, we will go back and live in the old home. Till

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then, it is good that we have health, work, and clear consciences," said Pierre, affectionately.

Meantime, the "*bon garçon*" had slipped placidly out, leaving Mère Dubois and her son Pierre to discuss, uninterrupted, the defects of the English climate. At the exit of the court, he joined a stream of noisy urchins, who were straggling along the muddy pavement towards the school-buildings, all conversing at the tops of their voices, close in the ears of their pals. Why, one often wonders, do small boys always behave as if their friends were stone deaf?

"Now, lads, look alive. Get to your places before I can say Jack Robinson. There is a big piece of news to-day for good boys and naughty boys."

An expectant silence, broken only by portentous sniffings, greeted Miss Wright's remark.

Then a hand went up, as though hailing an omnibus.

"Well, Tommy?"

"Please, teacher, nice news?"

"Jolly news, Tommy. Listen, boys. You

have all heard of His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop?"

"Y-u-s, teacher," in chorus, and a reproachful key. Surely even a governess need not have asked so unnecessary a question.

Up went the same hand again.

"Well, Tommy?"

"Please, teacher, I *seen* 'is Immense the day 'e come ter open the noo mission at the Priory."

"Did you, indeed, Thomas? Well, and what did you think of 'his Immense'?"

Tommy smacked his thigh appreciatively.

"Oh, 'e wos all right, 'e wos. Not 'alf a torf in 'is red rig."

"Quite so. I am glad you think so, Tommy. Well, this grand Prince of the Church has—what do you think? He has written you boys a letter, and had it printed for you, and you are each to have a copy of your own to keep."

Yells of appreciation and incredulity rent the air.

"Garn, teacher. Yer a kiddin' of us."

"No, indeed, I am not, Thomas Kieley. Now, sit down, all of you, and I will come round and give you each your copy. Then I

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will read the letter aloud, and you can follow it."

The boys tumbled, with a succession of crashes, off the desks, over which they had been sprawling, and seated themselves with praiseworthy rapidity.

Miss Wright then went along the line, delivering a printed paper to each, afterwards returning to her seat.

"Now I will read it aloud:—

“ ‘ Archbishop’s House,
“ ‘ Westminster, S.W.’ ”

"I know wher’ Westminster is. Near the ‘Ouses of Parlyment,” murmured Tommy, parenthetically.

“ ‘ MY DEAR CHILD,

“ ‘ The lambs of the flock always have a warm place in the heart of the Shepherd. Children, as you know, are called the lambs of Christ, and grown up people His sheep. You have, no doubt, seen the picture of the Good Shepherd leading the lambs and sheep across the green fields——’ ”

Here another hand went up.

“ Well, Uriel? ”

“ Please, teacher, I’ve seen it. It hangs in a window in the Euston Road, and the Good Shepherd has got one little lamb in His arms. And then there is the statue in our chapel.”

“ Quite right. Now we will go on with the letter:—

“ ‘ But all the little lambs are not as happy as those in the picture. Some of them have no fathers and mothers, and have strayed away and got lost among the thorns in the dark night, on the lonely hillsides. As I say, dear child, some children have no parents, while others, worse still, have fathers and mothers who are unkind to them——’ ”

A confirmative grunt interrupted Miss Wright, and one boy rubbed his head reminiscently.

“ ‘ It is about these unhappy children that I am writing to you.’ ”

“ Crikey! Why? ”

The corners of Miss Wright’s mouth twitched, and she laid down her paper.

“ Thomas Kieley, if you interrupt me once

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again, without permission, I shall send you out of the room, and take your letter away from you."

" ' Probably you will say, " But I am only a poor child myself. What can I do for anyone? " I will tell you. First of all, you can pray. ' "

A groan, turned hastily into a cough, from Tommy.

" ' Prayer can work miracles. And, mind, I do not want you to say long and tiring prayers; only just one tiny short prayer every day to the Good Shepherd for His little lost lambs. You can all do this. ' "

Here Miss Wright paused of her own accord.

" Do you hear, boys? You can all do this, can't you? Can't you each take the trouble to say one tiny prayer every day for the little children who are worse off than you are? "

The air became thick with hailing hands.

" Yus, rather, teacher—if we remember. "

" I will take good care that you remember—when you are anywhere near me. Very well. Now we will go on again:—

“‘Next, you can all give some pennies to buy bread and milk and clothes and firing for these poor little children when your prayers have found them out. Grown up people are to go into the streets and houses of this great city, seeking the lost children, and when they are found they will be placed in our Homes. But these Homes cost money. There is, as I say, food, firing, clothing, rent, and many other things to be bought for the children. Again, you may say, “But I am only a poor child, I cannot give money.” You can, my child: take a whole year. Do you not get farthings from your parents during a year, and sometimes even halfpennies, for sweets and peg tops and marbles? In the whole year do you not get twenty-four pennies in this way?’”

Miss Wright paused again, and an obvious financial examination of conscience went on.

Suddenly Tommy hailed.

“More’n twenty-four in the whole year, teacher.”

“Very well:—

“‘I want you and every other child to save

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up twenty-four pennies a year, instead of spending those pennies on yourselves. Perhaps one child's pennies would not go very far, but when the 30,000 children attending our schools each give two shillings, it is a large sum of money for the poor little waifs. Of course, any child may give more than this sum if he wishes, either of his own money or what he chooses to collect from other people. I wish all my children banded together into a Crusade, in which they will say the daily prayer and give the yearly two shillings for the little waifs. And on the second Sunday after Easter I wish the children to come to my house and give me their offerings in person.

“ ‘Till that day, goodbye, with my blessing,

“ ‘Ever, my dear child,

“ ‘Your devoted Father in Christ,

“ ‘DOROTHEUS, Cardinal Bonner.’ ”

“ Well, boys, what do you think of it? Will you all do it? Aren't you proud to be asked to help His Eminence? And aren't you downright glad to think you can help to save helpless children? All real manly boys are kind to

everything weaker than themselves, as I have often told you."

"Yus, teacher," acquiesced the chorus.

"Poor kiddies," sighed one boy. "I know wot it is meself sometimes."

"Well, now, put your letters in your pockets, and try to keep them clean. Dick, get out the slates, and we will have a dictation, as this is a short hour."

So, for a time, the episode was closed, and the girl resumed the usual work of the school, little thinking that during the past half hour a seed had been sown which would bring forth the fruit of her own and other destinies in more than one unlikely place and manner; little thinking that among her apparently commonplace small Cockney pupils there was hidden one who in time should come into intimate contact with the great Cardinal, by reason of the noble child-soul which had suddenly been charmed into burning, tormenting, passionate, yearning life through the magic of the Cardinal's words.

Miss Wright was a very unusual type of elementary school teacher. For one thing, she was

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American—a typical American—sprightly, clever, sensible, and with plenty of what is called “grit.”

Her father had been a rich merchant in New York, and the girl had been reared in every luxury. But Josiah Wright had failed suddenly and completely, in the true American style, which makes and loses huge fortunes in the briefest possible space of time—both he and his daughter taking their reverses with typical sangfroid.

“I’ll tell you, dad,” the girl had said, when they began to discuss future plans, “you and I will go over to old England and start there. I have a hankering after London, and Cockney children, so I will set up as a teacher, and you shall get into some business house as manager where you won’t have to invest your own money—only other people’s. And we will live together, and be real happy in a tiny new home of our own. We shall feel the changes much less in a new country, where all the customs are different; and I don’t fancy having old friends patronising and condoling. So, let’s turn over a completely new leaf.”

To England, therefore, they had come, and, even to her father's surprise, Philomena had insisted upon training as an elementary school teacher. Her sympathies, she declared, were entirely with "the People;" and then, though the salary might be lower than in the young ladies' schools, there was the liberty after school hours, besides the old age pension, to consider, both weighty matters to a girl of her temperament. Hence, we find her installed in a North London elementary school, in one of the worst slums in the city, thoroughly enjoying life and her work, and worshipped by the little Cockneys, over whom she reigned as a queen. It was not usual for women to teach in the Boys Schools, but the head master had recognised in her an inveterate boy lover; and after one trial, when he gave her his most troublesome class for a day, he had insisted upon having her transferred to his department. The head mistress had been somewhat haughty at this unceremonious poaching upon her select preserves, but Phil herself was delighted with the promotion, and had gone home to her "dad" in high glee.

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“You always know where you are with a boy,” she remarked, tweaking the old gentleman’s ear. “They never go off in the sulks about unintelligible trifles, as girls do. With a boy, there’s a good blaze up, and then it is all over, and you are better friends than ever.”

CHAPTER II

No sweeter thing than children's ways and wiles,
Surely, we say, can gladden eyes and ears;
Yet sometime sweeter than their words or smiles
Are even their tears.

A. C. Swinburne.

URIEL left school like a child in a dream. He had placed his precious letter in the breast pocket of his shabby little jacket, and he walked along, holding his hand over it, pressing it close against his heart. Golden Court was no longer a title of mocking satire; to him it was now golden, the whole world was golden—such of the outer world, at least, of which he was conscious. The vivid imagination of childhood was absorbed in the mental creation of a new outlook over life. He was living in two new worlds—one, the rapturous present, wherein he, little Uriel, could actually help his helpless fellow creatures; the other, a vaguely magnificent future, full of possibilities too great to be defined even by

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thought, yet none the less real for their nebulous greatness.

In the history of every child, sooner or later, there comes the supreme moment which awakens the *individual* soul. Across the soft, vague, gray dawn of infant-like dependence upon others, suddenly there flames the sunlight of conscious independent power. For the first time the child realises the *ego*, understands that he is a law unto himself, possessing power over his fellow-creatures. From being a puppet in a world of blind obedience, he emerges into a boundless empire over which he has the power to rule; he, with power to rule, who, all his short life, has hitherto been ruled. It is an intoxication. For the first time, consciously, he drinks of the wine of life.

And in Uriel's case, to this first inebriating realisation of individual power were added the still higher emotions of pity and the desire to save. In the acorn, are all the essentials of the full-grown oak; in the child-heart, are all the potentialities of the perfect man's; and through this humble child-heart, upon this murky February morning, in a remote city slum, there

surged, in waves of light and flame, the passions of chivalry which, from eternity to eternity, fire the earth and vie favourably even with the light of heaven. The unfailing magic of the touch of soul on soul had transformed this child into a perfect man, while leaving him more than ever a child.

He walked on, in a trance of happiness so exquisite that the pleasure was akin to pain, and the tears were not far from the surface of the great dark eyes. The fact that it was dinner time entirely escaped his memory; an instinct of which he was not even conscious prompted him to seek loneliness, solitude, some place where he could dream out the first part of his dream in peace. So his feet turned towards a church, that haven of rest to the weary poor, whose lives, from birth to death, are lived in one noisy round of perpetual publicity.

The mid-day Angelus had just pealed out—signal for dinner among the lowly. The caretaker had obeyed its welcome summons, and had departed, leaving behind her a powerful odour of sooty soapsuds. Old Father

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Pat was sitting down to his spare meal in the dingy little presbytery next door, so Uriel had the place to himself.

He slipped in, whipped off his cap, and mechanically dipped his grimy little fingers in the holy water stoup. Then he crept softly up the aisle into a quiet corner by the statue of the Good Shepherd. The little chapel was poor and shabby, but as clean as careful hands could keep it; and this statue was the brightest spot in the building. It was life size, and had recently been retouched by a grateful artizan, who offered his labour for love. To-day there was something new about the figure; its weary stoop, tender face, and bruised hands and feet for the first time pressed on the child's heart with a weight which seemed unbearable. He took out his precious letter, read it carefully through, as though to assure himself that he was not dreaming and that the great news was really true. Then he laid it down beside the bruised feet, and bowed his fair little head until that, too, rested there. For a long time he remained motionless in the same dumb ecstasy. But, after a bit, his thoughts took shape, and

passed in voiceless language through his brain.

"I am not only a poor little boy any more. I can help—yes, I can; it isn't a dream—I can help other little boys and girls, too, perhaps, to come to the dear Cardinal, and be safe and happy. There's my friend, Alice Smith, in our Court, for one. I know she's miserable, only she's afraid to say so. Perhaps if I told her about it, and showed her my letter, she might run away to the Cardinal, and then my pennies would help to keep her in the Home. That halfpenny a week that Mère Dubois gives me—I wonder if that would make two shillings a year."

Uriel lifted his head, began counting on his fingers, knitting his soft brows, and obviously making weighty calculations. After some time, he laid his head down once more by the statue's feet.

"Yes, it is more than two shillings. There are fifty-two weeks in the year, and fifty-two halfpennies, twenty-six pence, and twenty-six pence is two shillings and two pence; so I *shall* be able to do what the Cardinal wants us to. Oh, I am glad Mère Dubois does give me that

halfpenny. . . . Then, when I grow up, I shall be able to earn more. Big boys who have left school earn 12*s.* a week sometimes. And grown up men earn a pound and more, some of them. If I don't have a wife and children to pay for, I can give a lot out of that. I wonder——”

Here the thoughts again became too deep for form, and once more lost in a trance of rapture, he gazed into that nebulous future, veiled in golden mist. After a time, he raised his head and looked up into the face of the statue. Round the bowed head was a scroll, and upon the scroll were the words—“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep.”

Uriel whispered the words to himself, then gazed at the downcast face, and the bruised hands and feet, with new comprehension.

“Yes, I see. ‘The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep.’ He must *love* His sheep to die for them. And the Cardinal must love the Good Shepherd to care about the sheep, too. And then, the Cardinal must love us. Yes, I am certain he must, to ask us to help him mind them. The Cardinal would give

his life to find the little lost lambs, wouldn't he? Surely he would."

Another pause. Then the child jumped up, with the great tears standing at last in his eyes—priceless tears, the first tears of disinterested compassion, marking an epoch in the young life.

"Yes, and I would give mine, I would, I would. If I knew of a little child, cold and hungry and frightened and lonely, I would give my life to make it happy."

Once more he dropped on his knees—this poor impotent little orphan of a London slum, who was, in heart and desire, a human Christ. And then suddenly the school bell, with its hideous clamour, broke in upon his bliss, and transformed him into a hungry, anxious, little boy.

Hastily brushing away his tears, he stooped to pick up his cap, and, as he did so, he caught sight of a figure behind him. With a start, he turned round to face Father Pat. The old priest always made a visit to the chapel after his dinner, before setting out on his rounds in the parish, and Uriel had all unconsciously

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been nearly an hour and a half in the place. He gazed up into the kind old face, trying to collect his scattered thoughts and bring them back to every-day life.

“Well, sonny, I didn’t expect to find you here. Have you had your dinner? And did you come to say a prayer for something you want very much?”

Uriel considered. He was quite unable to analyse the state of soul through which he had been passing, though one thing alone was clear—he had not been saying his prayers.

“No, Father.”

“No to which, boy? There is nothing like being accurate, as Miss Wright often tells you.”

“No to both, please, Father. I haven’t had my dinner, and I haven’t been saying my prayers.”

Father Pat looked at him with gravity. A healthy boy who could be unconscious of the dinner hour was a rare phenomenon, to be treated with reverence, especially when the cause of the omission did not, as Father Pat well know, lie in the child’s home.

"After all," reflected the old man, "a child's secrets are as sacred to him as ours are to us. I have no right to take advantage of my priesthood as a means to Paul Prying."

At that moment he caught sight of the folded paper lying at the feet of the statue. Picking it up, he recognised the Cardinal's letter, which had been given to the teachers for distribution in the school that day. He folded it carefully into its original creases, then stood looking down into Uriel's tear-stained, flushed face for so long without speaking that the child began to wonder.

"I see," he said at last, laying his wrinkled old hand in blessing on the golden head; "I see. Go home, my child, and get your dinner. Mère Dubois will be anxious about you. I will tell Miss Wright that you have a half holiday this afternoon."

"Oh, thank you, Father! Now I can go and see Beauty, and tell him all about it."

Eagerly taking back his letter, Uriel kissed the priest's hand, and vanished expeditiously. Outside the chapel door he broke into a run, and never stopped until he reached home.

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Mère Dubois was standing on the doorstep, gazing anxiously towards the entrance of the court.

"Oh, *ma mère*, I am so sorry I kept you waiting," he cried, throwing his arms round her neck. "Just read this letter. It made me forget all about dinner, and then I went into chapel."

"Thanks be to *le bon Dieu* that you are safely back. I knew you could never have been kept in for naughtiness, so feared you had met with an accident. A letter—and from the good Cardinal? What next!"

They went in together, and while Uriel gobbled down his bread and milk, Mère Dubois slowly perused the precious paper.

"It is well. You can help, even you. Do as the Cardinal bids you, *mon enfant*, and never forget it all your life."

Dinner finished, Uriel washed his face and hands, smoothed his yellow mane, and set off once more along the streets. This time he turned in the opposite direction, and threaded his way through some cross roads till he arrived at a point where four met, under a railway

bridge, beneath which stood a stalwart young constable.

Directly he caught sight of this figure, Uriel broke into a run, and pulled up at the officer's side with an elaborate salute, which the good-natured giant returned.

"Good afternoon, Beauty. Father Pat has given me a half holiday, so I thought I would come and see you. I have got something to tell you."

The constable smiled indulgently. His duty was monotonous; the hours passed slowly, and of late he had quite got into the habit of watching for the bright head in the dingy street. For a whole month he was on point duty at the railway arches, a duty chillier and fraught with less excitement than that of patrolling.

"Have you, indeed? And what might that be?"

Uriel looked all round to see if there were any likely interruption looming, then broke into a flood of eager words.

"Oh, you would never guess, never, never. The Cardinal has written to us to ask us to help

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him save other poor children, poor children who aren't happy and haven't enough to eat. We are to give our halfpennies for them, and if thirty thousand children give two shillings a year, it will come to a lot."

Beauty stroked his moustache reflectively.

"I reckon it will, little 'un. Well, it's nice for a boy like you to be helping other boys. No one knows, no they don't, what children in London have to put up with until they come to be in my line a bit. It nigh broke my heart at first, it did."

"Didn't you always live in London, then?" Uriel asked, diverted for a moment from the main idea.

Beauty slowly shook his head.

"Ah, no. I come from Devonshire (he pronounced it "Demshire," in the true West Country way) where the clotted cream is, and the sea and the red sandstone, and the little ferns growing right down to the edge of the water."

Uriel looked up at the cloud on the handsome face under the helmet. It was a face which, with its finely cut profile, blue eyes,

golden moustache, and peach-like complexion, had earned for its owner the nickname of "Beauty" directly he entered the police force. At first, he had rebelled against the mawkish nature of the title; but rebellion had been in vain, and now he was so used to being so addressed, both by his fellow-constables and the inhabitants of his division generally, that it was more familiar to him than his own lawful name.

The next minute, the constable was majestically waving a cautioning hand at a costermonger who was belabouring his donkey with unnecessary vigour, after which he turned to Uriel with a smile.

"Well," continued the boy, reassured, "what I wanted to ask you was, how do you think I could make a little money, some more pennies a week, for the poor children? I should like to *work* for them, you know; not just only give what is mine. But I am such a little boy still!"

Again Beauty stroked his moustache, and reflected deeply.

"Yes," he said at last, in his soft, liquid

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Devonshire voice, from which the distinguishing accent had not yet been obliterated.

"Yes," he remarked again pensively.

At this instant the inspector, accompanied by a sergeant, appeared in sight, patrolling. Beauty gathered himself up and saluted, Uriel doing the same.

The inspector smiled kindly at the child.

"Yours, Hanaford?"

"No, sir. Mine's not breeched yet. He's only a pal, this one."

"And going ter be a p'leeceman 'imself, when he grows up, no doubt," said the sergeant, with a grin, as they passed along.

Beauty again lowered himself to Uriel's range of observation, finding the child in a reverie.

"Yes, of course, I mean to be a policeman when I grow up. But, oh, what were you going to say when the inspector came?"

"Why," resumed Beauty, "I know a man, a pensioned police officer, who keeps a little paper shop, and I shouldn't wonder if he wants a boy to go round with the papers. I'll speak to him to-night when I go off. He'd give one

and sixpence a week, and you could do it after and before school hours. I shouldn't wonder if you would suit each other proper."

Uriel flung up his cap and gave vent to a loud hurrah. Then he suddenly became very grave.

"Oh, you dear, good, kind Beauty, I do love you very much. But——"

"Well, what?"

Uriel's brows were knitted in another painful calculation.

"Why, Mère Dubois, you see. She is awfully good to me. I am an orphan, you know, and she has kept me for years. And I am afraid that if I earn any money it ought to go to her. Somehow it seems unkind not to make up a little to her, doesn't it?" he concluded anxiously.

Beauty reflected.

"Well, little 'un, I like your feeling. Charity begins at home, they say, and if she's a widow, too. Tell you what—give her half and the poor kids half, and then you'd be killing two birds with one stone."

Again Uriel flung up his cap with a cheer.

“Hurrah! I’ll ask her. I’m sure she will be pleased. Oh, you are a brick! When will you know? When can you tell me?”

“Well, come on here after afternoon school to-morrow. I am sure to know by then.”

Uriel seized the constable’s brawny hand, and kissed it passionately.

Then, without another word, he was off like a rabbit in the direction of home.

Beauty gazed after him for a moment, with a strange-looking smile. Then, abruptly clearing his throat, he lifted and replaced his helmet, and resumed his measured tread to and fro underneath the railway arch, across which the trains thundered ceaselessly.

CHAPTER III

Little hand so glad of giving,
Little heart so glad of love,
Little soul so glad of living
While the strong swift hours are weaving
Light with darkness woven above.
A. C. Swinburne.

BEAUTY's plan—or to give him his full name and title—the plan of Police Constable James Hanaford, Y 515, worked admirably. His acquaintance, the pensioned police officer, had wanted the services of a paper boy at one and sixpence a week, and, upon the recommendation of his uniformed friend, Uriel had secured the post. Mère Dubois was in raptures, and, most accommodatingly, desired her foster son to keep one shilling a week for the poor children, giving only the sixpence to her.

Uriel's pride at being actually "in work" was almost past description; and the evening

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when he received his first wages was one of the red letter days of his life. He took the precious coins, as he had taken the Cardinal's letter, to the chapel, there to brood over them in peace. The money, together with the weekly halfpenny which Mère Dubois still insisted upon paying, was laid at the feet of the statue, where also the fair head was once more bowed down; and finally they were conveyed to Beauty for his sympathetic congratulations.

"Mère Dubois is a brick," cried Uriel, holding out the coins on his little palm for inspection. "She won't let me give the whole half to her. She says she can manage and would have managed just the same if I hadn't got work, and she likes to think it is going to people worse off than me. I don't think she would even have taken the sixpence if I hadn't made her. And she has given me an old candle box to keep it in every week till it is time to take it to school. She has stuck up the lid with paste, and Pierre cut a hole in the top of it; so it is a real money-box, and we are not going to open it till the day. Of course, next year I shall have ever so much more. This year,

you see, I shall only have been working eight weeks."

"Yes, you will have a good bit more next year," agreed Beauty. Little did he or Uriel think that their words were prophetic in a sense of which neither dreamt.

"I say, little 'un," remarked the constable, after a pause, during which the boy carefully bestowed the money in his breeches pocket. "Don't they give away those collecting cards at your school—penny a prick business—for this kind of work?"

Uriel nodded. "Yes, and we keep the cards and fill them up as we get the pennies, and then give in the cards and the pennies, both together."

"Well, I was thinking; if you like to get me two or three cards, I'll ask our fellows to give a penny each. They wouldn't miss that, the young ones that lives in the Station; and that would make more for the cand—money-box, I mean. They are good-natured chaps."

Uriel pranced with rapture.

"Oh, do, do! Oh, you are good dear Beauty! Really, you know, it is you who have

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done more for the poor children than me. I should never have got the work if it hadn't been for you."

"Oh, well, if you come to that," said Beauty, hurriedly, "I should never have thought of it if you hadn't asked me."

"How many pennies will you get, do you think?"

"Well, I should say about forty."

"Forty! Forty pence are three and fourpence. Oh, it is coming true!"

Before the constable could ask what was coming true, there turned the corner a cart drawn by a horse obviously nearly exhausted. The driver, a low-looking man, was shouting a volley of rough language at the wretched animal and jerking the bit in a manner sickening to behold.

In a flash Beauty was out in the road, had laid a detaining hand on the bridle, and was jotting down particulars in his notebook.

"You will leave that horse and cart in my charge while you get a trace horse to help you," he said authoritatively. "You're overweight."

The man rolled sulkily off the driving seat.

"'Taint my fault, copper. If the guv'nor don't give me proper 'orse power, wot am I ter do? I'm bahnd to git the job done."

"Now, none of your lip," interposed the constable sternly. "We've heard too much of that already. It is your fault when you maul the horse about, knowing the load was too much for him. Your guv'nor won't thank you for ill-treating him. And its ten to one if he hasn't ordered you to hire extra power for the hill, and given you the shilling to do it with. Eh?"

The man looked very much taken aback for the moment, then brazened it out.

"Oh, very well. We shall see when we report it to your guv'nor," concluded the constable, curtly. "If you have had the order and the shilling, as most carmen have, and if you have drunk it, like many of them do, your guv'nor will settle with you. Off with you, and look sharp. I'm not here to mind horses and carts all the afternoon."

The driver rolled off, obviously ill at ease. Uriel listened, thrilled. Beauty, when roused, was a very different man to the great, gentle

creature of his previous acquaintance. The child gazed curiously at the stern, handsome face, and watched every movement of the wise hands as they passed over the animal's legs and mouth. Finally, he sidled up to him.

"Do you love horses, Beauty? And what are you going to do with the man?" he asked in honeyed tones.

The constable drew out a handkerchief, wiped his hands, and settled his helmet.

"Of course I love horses. I lived with them all day long when I was a boy on my father's farm in Demshire. It's a thing I shall never get used to, the cruelty to horses in London. Do with the man? Why, as the animal isn't injured, we shall report to the owner, caution him against over-loading, and recommend him to sanction the employment of a trace horse for hills anywhere—which probably he does already. This man has a very good chance of getting the sack, I think. But what were you going to say is coming true?"

Again, Uriel clapped his hands and pranced.

"Why, I believe, in fact, I'm almost certain, that I shall have *gold* to give to

the Cardinal for his children. Just think of that!"

"Well, that would be jolly, and for the first collection, too," agreed Beauty, with an indulgent smile. "All right, little 'un, you bring those cards up to-morrow, and we will start making gold like the fairy godmothers in the stories. Going? Good-night."

Time passed on, and at last brought round the Easter holidays and the re-opening of school on Easter Wednesday.

"Well, boys," said Miss Wright, who was looking more like a rose than ever after her week's holiday, which she had spent in the open air, "how have you been getting on with the collecting cards?"

Unintelligible murmurs broke from the class, and at last Thomas Kieley hailed:—

"Please, teacher, I've got two cards full up," he announced, with the air of a martyr.

"Bravo, Tommy! At that rate you will be one to go with us to see the Cardinal."

Uriel turned pale with excitement. This was an idea which had not before occurred to him, and his heart began to beat with a strange,

disquieting palpitation. He watched Miss Wright anxiously, but her curiosity upon the subject of the boys' collections was apparently over, and she asked no more questions. Surely, if Tommy, with his two cards, stood a good chance, what would not befall a boy with more than twice that number? He might even be the one to hand the bag to the Cardinal himself.

Uriel waited a week, and, ah! how long is a week to a child in suspense! Upon the following Wednesday, Miss Wright had ordered the boys to bring their cards and collections to afternoon school for checking, list making, and representative choosing. The previous night Uriel scarcely slept, and he was again quite pale with excitement when Mère Dubois solemnly placed the money-box on the table after dinner. Beauty was there, by special invitation. Uriel had declined to allow anyone else to open the box and count the money.

"It will be such a treat to him," he pleaded, with his arms round Mère Dubois's neck. "He can't go with us to see the dear Cardinal,

though he has done so much for the poor children. So I really think he ought to be the one to open my box."

Beauty, therefore, duly appeared, in a state of shy pleasure, having curtailed his rest by two hours in order to accept Uriel's invitation, though he took good care not to mention this self-sacrificing fact.

Mère Dubois received him with warmth, and he was accommodated with a chair and a penknife.

Slowly and gravely, as befitted the occasion, the cardboard lid was parted from its box, and a goodly collection of silver and copper coins presented to view.

"Now, count, dear Beauty; and do be quick! Surely, surely there is enough to change into gold. Oh, do be quick!"

But, being a typical British constable, it was not in Beauty's power to be quick. Simple, kind-hearted, patient, brave—he was all these, but *not* quick.

Ponderously, he sorted the coins into heaps for checking. Then he counted them, and looked up with a smile.

"Bravo, little 'un. Gold it is. Seventeen and fourpence. Shake hands."

Uriel shook. But his feelings of thankfulness got the better of him, and he abruptly bolted, lest Beauty should see two large tears. In a few minutes he returned, looking flushed but composed, and found his uniformed friend still there.

"As I happen to be going your way," began Beauty, invaraciously, "I thought I might walk with you as far as the school door. Some of the bigger chaps are up to all sorts of tricks. Another thing, I can change the ten shillings into a half sovereign for you at the Three Horseshoes as we go by."

So the two departed, followed by a shower of blessings from Mère Dubois, and sympathetic grins from Pierre.

And Uriel reached his place in school without mishap. His turn did not come for some time, and he listened eagerly as each boy's total was read out. So far, Thomas Kieley was the best, and even he had nothing like gold.

At last "Uriel Adair" was called, and, with a throbbing heart, he walked up to his teacher

and laid the pile of cards, together with the half sovereign, seven shillings, and four pennies, before her.

The girl stared as though she could hardly believe her bright black eyes.

"My dear fellow, where did you get it? Nearly a sovereign! Is it all from you?"

"Yes, please, Miss," stammered the child, painfully conscious of the unwinking attention of the class behind him, which was swarming over the desks to see the miracle.

"Boys, go back to your places. Have you never seen a half sovereign before? Now, Uriel, tell me how you managed to collect all this?"

Poor Uriel turned red and white, and struggled in vain for words. It had been so easy to tell Beauty and Mère Dubois what he had done for the Cardinal's poor children, but somehow he could not bear to mention it before those grinning boys.

Womanlike, Miss Wright divined that something delicately sacred lay behind his emotion.

"All right, old fellow," she said, laying a kind little hand on his shoulder. "No doubt it

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will take a long time to remember, so you can tell me after school, when there will be no hurry."

"Beastly little sneak. I b'lieve he's pinched it," growled one big, ill-conditioned boy, whose donation had not reached the total of a shilling.

"Pity you didn't do the same, then," piped Thomas Kieley. "It's all right if 'e 'as. 'Taint as if 'e had kep' it for 'imself."

Fortunately for her peace of mind, his teacher did not overhear these sentiments from one of her best scholars, uttered, too, the very day after her spirited instruction upon the seventh commandment. She was, for the time, thinking too hard about Uriel to notice the other boys. And when they were at last dismissed, and she was free to cross-examine, she turned to the child with eager interest. But Uriel then needed no pressing. He loved his winsome young mistress very dearly, and, directly the door closed behind the last boy, he broke into a flood of language.

"Oh, please, Miss, I took a place as paper boy at one and sixpence a week, and Mère Dubois wouldn't take more than the sixpence;

so that is how I did it. Then, she gives me a halfpenny a week just the same, and Beauty got the rest from the other policemen."

"Who in the world is Beauty?"

"Oh, his proper name is Police Constable Hanaford, but they always call him Beauty everywhere, 'cos he's so handsome. He got me the post as paper boy."

Miss Wright looked down at the fair flushed face, and was silent for a time, as Father Pat had been the day he found Uriel in the chapel.

"Very well, darling," she said at last, very gently, "I quite understand. You shall, of course, be the one to present the purse to His Eminence, and I wish you to present your own collection separately as well."

Uriel went home in ecstasy to await the coming of the great day which dawned at last, bright and sunny, as all children's feast days should. Uriel's toilet had been made with unusual care by his devoted foster-mother, and the child looked more than commonly high-bred and spirituelle when he joined Miss Wright at the school. Four other boys were to go with them, Thomas Kieley being one;

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and the head mistress was also there with her contingent of girls and infants. Then there was a long 'bus ride, a treat which reduced the boys to the verge of delirium; and finally they found themselves in the Cardinal's house, passing upstairs into a great room at the very top, which was densely crowded with children. At one end stood a great red and gold chair, surrounded by a half circle of other chairs, upon which were seated some very fine-looking ladies, near whom stood several Canons and Monsignors in their distinctive robes.

"We are a little late," whispered Miss Wright. "We shan't get up till the last. Keep close to me, Uriel, and take my arm if you feel yourself getting separated from me."

At this moment there was an expectant murmur, and the Cardinal swept in, arrayed in white, scarlet, and gold. Uriel gazed, open-mouthed. In all his life he had never seen anyone so beautiful or so grand. He could hardly believe that this magnificent Prince had really written the letter, or that he could possibly want to see so many little ragamuffins at his own house.

But if the Cardinal did not care, he was a most consummate actor. His words to the children rose from the depths of a strong man's heart, and more than once tears shone in the haughty eyes. Uriel never forgot that speech, which was as the call to arms from a great king to his loyal subjects; an appeal for help in his work of salvation—help from helpless children for their own kind. Uriel rubbed his eyes and gave a great sigh. It was true, then; here was the Cardinal actually asking him, Uriel, to be “the saviour of perishing little ones.”

After the speech came the supreme ceremony of purse presenting. The Cardinal seated himself in the great gold chair, and announced that he wished every child present to pass before him and place its offering in his own hand. So the long file began—big children, little children, young ladies, East Enders, tired-looking parish priests with their flocks; nuns, in every imaginable habit, black, brown, white, gray, and blue; secular teachers, men and women; all passed before the stately figure, kissed the episcopal ring, and received a hearty “God bless you.”

Nearer and nearer came the great moment. Uriel watched the other children, watched the beautiful face under the scarlet biretta, almost unable to believe that in a few minutes it would be bending over him.

At last his turn came. Miss Wright took him by the arm, and pushed him down at the Cardinal's feet, kneeling, too, beside him.

"Boys' School, North Square, please your Eminence," she announced. "And please, my lord, this boy has collected seventeen shillings, all himself—gold, your Eminence."

"God bless you, my child; and God bless you too, little one."

For one blissful moment the grand face smiled down tenderly into his own, and the ringed hand was laid on the fair head in a special blessing. Then the attendant Canon moved them gently on, and the great experience was over.

CHAPTER IV

What will it please you, hereafter, my darling, to be?
Fame upon land will you look for, or glory by sea?
Gallant your life will be always, and all of it free.

A. C. Swinburne.

THE Metropolitan Elementary Schools were fated to enjoy unusual excitements that spring. Shortly after the Cardinal's "at home" (which, by the way, was reported in several of the dailies, giving the children that unequalled sensation of "being in print") there came an announcement from a Society of a great competition in which all elementary school children were invited to join. A large number of prizes were to be awarded; the prize meeting was to be held at the Crystal Palace, under the auspices of some distinguished public characters; and, apart from the pain of writing the essay, the whole programme was full of attractions to the gutter snipe.

Miss Wright announced the affair to her

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class, one Monday morning, towards the end of April.

“Of course, boys, I don’t want to press you,” she said gently; but I should like you all to take part in this competition. I am very proud of my boys, and I believe they are sharper than any other boys; and I am sure there would be at least one prize awarded in this class.”

Here a hand went up—Thomas Kieley’s, of course.

“Please, teacher, I’ll do it. Wot’s the prizes?”

Miss Wright consulted her list.

“There are various grades of prizes. For the first class, so many silver watches——”

“Crikey!”

“For the second, so many handsome books; for the third, so many medals.”

“Wot’s the paper to be about, teacher?”

“It is to be a very short paper—only 200 words—answering the question—‘What am I going to be when I grow up, and why?’”

Thomas sighed with relief.

“That’s easy. I’m er goin’ ter be a cats’-

meat man, I am. I was afraid it 'ud be sums or some sich stuff."

Miss Wright's bright eyes twinkled.

"I shouldn't give away my ideas to the vulgar herd, if I were you, Thomas. You don't want to be supplying original matter to the unimaginative. Very well. I shall put your name down at the top of my list, because you were the first to respond. Who next?"

Another hand went up.

"Very well. Uriel Adair, second. Next?"

Several more signalled, and in half an hour the class, to a boy, had taken the fatal plunge.

"Mind, you are going to do it entirely yourselves, spelling and all. Every teacher has to certify that it is the unaided work of the competitors. We will devote one Friday afternoon to it."

"Please, teacher, are we all goin' ter the Crystal Palace to see the show?"

"Yes, all those who compete are to go, whether they are prizewinners or not."

During the third week in April, the harassed parents of the rising working—and criminal—generation heard enough of their offsprings'

future plans to afford them food for reflection to the ends of their lives. Morning, noon, and night was the subject discussed; various and startling were the rôles chosen. Girls, besides boys, were competing, and, as a significant sign of the times, be it recorded that domestic service had not one votary, and Holy Matrimony was merely the last resource of the hopelessly unimaginative.

"Seems ter me, you gels say you're going ter be married when you grow up becos yer aint got gumption enough ter think uf nofink else," remarked one weary materfamilias at breakfast upon the eventful Friday morning. "And you say yer goin' ter git married becos yer won't 'ave to work if yer've got 'usbands ter keep yer. When the gels know as much of materomony as wot I do, you'll know it's ten ter one if you don't 'ave ter keep not o'ny yer-selves, but yer 'usbands an' childern as well."

This remark was delivered in a rising inflection, which appeared to have reference to paterfamilias, who was lounging at the street door, smoking a short clay and awaiting the opening of his pet pub.

"Now, none er your lip," growled this reposeful figure, removing the clay from his mouth and looking in. "If I 'ear any more about wot yer goin' ter be, I'll take the strap ter the lot er yer, and then p'raps ther won't be much uv yer left to be anythink. So, cheese it now, while ther's time."

Acting upon this delicately worded hint, the family finished its meal in silence. Paterfamilias rarely interfered in the domestic management, but when he did, he was invariably treated with respect.

During that week, Mère Dubois tried in vain to extract from Uriel what his plans were for the future. That nebulous, golden future, once so vague and magnificent, had at last taken a definite form, and the subject was too great for idle discussion. Besides, had not Miss Wright warned them to hold their tongues?

As usual, Uriel had gone to consult Beauty upon a knotty question. It was curious how the child always craved for *male* advice. And one item of the competition affair troubled the sensitive delicacy of his mind.

"You know," he began, "I always used to say I was going to be a policeman."

"Yes," agreed Beauty complacently.

"Well, would it hurt your feelings very much if I had changed my mind?" asked Uriel, looking anxiously up into the handsome face.

Beauty stroked his moustache to hide a smile. His moustache, by the way, was about the colour of Uriel's hair.

"Why no, little 'un, of course not. Everybody isn't bound to be in the force. There would be no one left to run in if they were."

Uriel sighed with relief. The notion of remaining outside the chosen people in order to afford them material for professional occupation appeared to afford him unqualified satisfaction.

"I never thought of that. It would be dull for you, wouldn't it, poor Beauty? I am glad that is settled then. Now, what I want to know is this. I suppose we are really and truly obliged to say what we like best? It must be quite best, and not next best?"

"Quite best, I should say," replied Beauty

gravely. "You see, they say they want to know what you would most like to be and why; and it isn't quite on the straight to put 'em off with the second best, is it?"

Again Uriel sighed, this time not happily.

"N—o—, I suppose not. That's what I was afraid of."

"Might a fellow ask what you are going to be?"

Uriel shook his golden head.

"I'm afraid not, dear Beauty. Miss Wright said we oughtn't to tell anyone till the day after it was done. Of course heaps of them have, but they ought not to have."

"I see. You are quite right, little 'un. Well, whatever it is, I wish you good luck and one of the first prizes."

Uriel departed, shaking his head. If he really had to say what he preferred to be, above every middle course, he was quite sure he would not win even a third prize. And the temptation to adopt the middle course was sore.

Unusual calm reigned in the elementary schools that afternoon. Most of them had

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chosen the last day of the week, because it gave the teacher the next day free to look over the essays. Many flushed faces, some tears, and much stertorous breathing were the chief symptoms attending the task of original composition.

Miss Wright's class finished easily by closing time, and she received the papers with laudable pride at their goodly quantity. When the time came for looking over them, the soft spot in the girl's heart was revealed by the fact that she searched through them all until she came to one bearing the name of "Uriel Adair." She had expected something uncommon from her pet lamb, but certainly not the particular uncommonness which greeted her. First, she uttered an exclamation of surprise, then she laughed, and, finally, bright tears found their way into her black eyes.

"Poor little Uriel. I am afraid your ambition can never be fulfilled. And yet—who knows? Strange things do happen."

Strange things do happen; and when, some weeks later, on the morning of the great prize-giving day, her best boy arrived at school with

a rich black eye, a swelled nose, and several scratches down one cheek, she felt this was one of the strangest.

"Uriel Adair, is it possible that *you* have been fighting?"

Poor Uriel turned scarlet.

"Yes, please, miss."

"But I don't please. You are only fit for the Chamber of Horrors. The prize lists have just come, and you have taken one of the first, and how on earth am I going to take you to the Crystal Palace to see General Sir Edwin Noble with an eye like that?"

Yells of surprise rent the air at this announcement.

"Fust prize! Aint yer kiddin', teacher?"

"Why, that's a silver ticker, aint it?"

"'Ere, I say, Uriel, wot wos yer paper abaht? Give us the tip fer next time."

"We shall always know the emit now."

"Garn! Wot's the good er talkin' tea-leaves talk ter 'im? 'E don't know nothink abaht that."

In which statement, Thomas Kieley was correct. It was *not* vouchsafed to all, the knowl-

edge of criminal lingo, in which a thief is known as a "tea-leaf," time as "emit," a bloater as a "two-eyed steak," a slice of bread as a "door-step," and so on *ad infinitum*.

"Silence, boys. Uriel, I shall not take you until I hear the truth about this fight. And if you don't look sharp, we shall miss the train."

Goaded past endurance at this horrible suggestion, Thomas Kieley hurled himself into the fray.

"Please, teacher, lemme tell. I seen it all, so I can tell yer much better'n 'im."

"Very well. Only do look sharp."

Conscious of his sudden greatness and of the many eyes, Tommy squirmed up an adjacent desk and began his thrilling tale.

"As we wos comin' 'ome from school yess-day, we seen a gang o' boys t'other end o' Golden Court, and, o' course, we shoves in ter see wot wos up. It wos a pore little kitten. One big bloke 'ad got it, and was goin' ter 'ang it to a lamp post. The string was roun' its neck and all. Made me jolly glad I'm goin' ter be a cat's meat man, it did," he added, lapsing into reverie.

“Never mind that now,” exclaimed Miss Wright, with flashing eyes. “Go on about the kitten. I hope you took it away, and hanged the boy to the lamp-post instead.”

Tommy smacked his thigh, and broke into a hoarse chuckle.

“Nobody didn’t *’ang* ’im, teacher. But ’e didn’t ’alf git paid. Afore I could say ‘knife,’ Uriel was at ’im like a bulldog, and ’ad tripped ’im up an’ wos on top of ’im, banging ’is ’ead on the pavements ’ard as ’e could bang. D’rectly the other chaps seen ’im down, some of ’em went for Uriel, and some of ’em went for ’im, and, Lor’ lo’ me, it was a set to. I waited till they wos at it tooth and nail, and then I just ’ollered ‘Copper,’ and they wos off round the corner in a couple er shakes, except the big boy, and ’e wos too bad ter run. Uriel ’ad ’alf killed ’im. So then Uriel snatched up the kitten and ’id it under ’is jacket, and we cut and run; and Uriel’s nose was bleedin’ like a good ’un,” concluded Tommy, with gusto.

Miss Wright walked up to the damaged hero of the fight.

“Shake, old fellow, I’m proud to take you

with that face. Come on, boys, if you want to catch the train.

It was a beautiful day, and the children enjoyed themselves as only children—and Cockney children—can. After an ample dinner, they were marched round into order, and then marshalled into the huge hall. At one end was a platform, bearing many tables, covered with packages of various sizes. The children from each school were kept together, with their teachers, and moved up to the platform in regular order. Several gentlemen were in attendance on the General, handed him the prizes, and gave out the winners' names and the subjects of their papers.

At last Uriel's turn came, and, as at Archbishop's House, Miss Wright kept close beside him.

"Hello, is this the little Cardinal?" laughed the great soldier. "Cardinals don't fight, surely, do they, even if their robes *are* scarlet like our uniforms? Or did you get that black eye falling down stairs? I b'lieve that's the way black eyes are invariably got, isn't it, Wood? Ha, ha!"

Here Miss Wright chipped in, and told the story in a few spirited words.

The General's face grew grave.

"Well done, little Cardinal. Shake hands, boy. Here is your watch. And don't forget to wage war on cowards all your life. It is better to die than to be a coward, and if you sanction cowardice, you are a coward yourself."

A year later, when the news reached England of the death of the gallant soldier with all his wounds in front, Miss Wright recalled his words to Uriel, and a lump came into her throat as she read the account of the funeral with full military honours.

"He deserved them, if any soldier ever did," she exclaimed to her old dad, with a sob. "I shall never forget his bonny face that day. And he was the first to call my Uriel the little Cardinal."

CHAPTER V

And well though I know it,
As fain would I write,
Child, never a poet
Could praise you aright.

A. C. Swinburne.

THE London season was at its height, and a dinner party was being given in Belgravia—a dinner party which, strange to say, had reference to the unconscious little Cardinal away in his northern slum.

I have said “a dinner party in Belgravia,” though this remark requires qualification, since it was not a dinner party in the ordinary sense of the phrase. The party was in reality more like a family party, and consisted of Lord and Lady Fairholme, their son Cedric, their two daughters, Grace and Mary, old Father Pat, from the vicinity of distant Golden Square, and—His Eminence, the Cardinal.

The Fairholmes were cousins of the Cardi-

nal's, and Father Pat one of his oldest friends, who had been quite an experienced priest at the time of His Eminence's ordination.

"Well, Father Pat, and how are the back slums?" was the Cardinal's smiling greeting to the old man, who was the last arrival.

"A great deal better than the fashionable squares, thank you, my lord," retorted the priest, with a chuckle.

"Ah, we all know there is no paradise to beat your parish," laughed His Eminence. "How many of your flock have been in this week's police news for misappropriation of other people's property, and such like little pleasantries?"

"Well, then, your Eminence, it's themselves that knows. I couldn't count 'em."

A burst of laughter greeted this reply.

"I can't think how you can pretend to like such people," said Grace, with a sneer.

"I don't pretend, Miss Grace, so I can fully sympathise with your mystification."

The girl shrugged her shoulders impatiently.

"Well, how can you like them, then, if you are so particular as to words?"

“ I’ll tell you, my child. I love them because they are genuine.”

An audible smile from the Cardinal.

“ Genuine? ”

“ Yes. There is nothing of the Pharisee about them. There is only the publican and the sinner.”

Grace coloured deeply, but returned no answer.

“ A student of Scripture like yourself, Miss Grace, will know, in a moment, which of the two sorts of human weakness the Lord preferred. My poor people don’t pretend to be any better than they are. They don’t frequent the Sacraments, and read good books, and belong to Sodalties, and then spend the rest of their time in backbiting their neighbours and worshipping at the altar of Fashion. They seldom go to church—even for their Easters ” —here Father Pat shot a challenging glance at the Cardinal—“ and they often figure in the police news. But I have never once heard any one of them condemn a fellow creature, or fail to help any man, woman, or child in trouble, even if such help meant their own

scanty daily bread—and whisky. The rich, when they trouble their ignorant heads at all about the matter, wonder how the poor live. I can tell them. They live, not on the erratic alms of the rich, but on the open-handed, never-failing charity of the poor.”

“That’s one *ex humero* for you, old girl,” muttered her brother. “Put that in your pipe and smoke it.”

The “old girl” made a painful effort to recover her usual supercilious demeanour, but had not signally succeeded by the time dinner was announced. This meal was unusually simple, and concluded in less than an hour, when the ladies left the men to their wine.

“Father Pat, you were a little hard on Grace,” began the Cardinal, as he waved away all offers of drink and tobacco.

“Not a bit,” interposed Grace’s father, with a laugh. “A little snub in public does more than a peck of parental correction in private; and her mother and I have been rather anxious about her lately.”

“Ah, now, don’t be that, Lord Fairholme,” replied Father Pat tenderly. “She’s a good

child at bottom, but just suffering a bit from the infallibility of youth. That's all."

Cedric looked up, with a broad grin on his dark, good-tempered face.

"Oh, so you have heard that story, too, sir? Doesn't it exactly describe us youngsters?"

"So it does, Cedric, my boy, you especially."

"What is the story," demanded the Cardinal imperiously.

"Oh, nothing much, my lord. It is said to have emanated from one of our oldest and most learned judges. He was hearing some evidence from a young witness, who gave testimony in a specially self-assertive way even for the present century. And, when it was concluded, his lordship leant back with a weary sigh, murmuring to himself, 'We are none of us infallible, even the youngest of us.'"

The Cardinal broke into a peal of laughter, in which he was joined by his cousin.

"'Pon my word, that is good. I bet anything that was a judge with young daughters," said Lord Fairholme.

"Tell you what, Francis, why don't you send her to one of the settlements? That will

take the starch out of her. Let her go for a month right in among the poor, to see how they live, and to learn their incomparable virtues, as well as their infinitesimal vices. If that doesn't reduce her to her proper size, nothing will."

"Bless your Eminence for that," exclaimed Father Pat with fervour.

"Ah, Father Pat, it's many such blessings we want in order to lighten the burden of this weighty scarlet. Remember, I was once a poor soggarth like you, living in among my poor, caring nothing for the affairs of Church and state in high places."

"True for you, my lord, you were; and a bit of a termagant you were, too, even in those days. But don't blame the weight of the scarlet. If it were less heavy, it wouldn't be strong enough to bear all that rests on it."

"That's true," agreed the Cardinal, with a weary sigh. "And, light or heavy, it's all one now. It has to be worn and borne *usque ad mortem*, so one can only make the best of a bad bargain. Ah, Father Pat, you may well thank heaven that you have lived and will die a simple parish priest."

"People little know what they wish for half the time they are wishing," said the old man thoughtfully. He hardly seemed to have heard the Cardinal's last remark. "And yet, perhaps, he will get it, and have the heart to go through with it."

"Who and what?" asked Lord Fairholme, with a smile.

"I was thinking of a child, an orphan, in one of my slums—a tiny drop in the great ocean of industrial population."

The Cardinal rose.

"Francis, let us join the ladies if you are ready. If Father Pat has a story to tell, it is a pity they should not hear it."

They found Lady Fairholme absorbed in turning the heel of a little stocking, Mary reading, and Grace reclining before the wood fire, which was still pleasant in the sharp evenings of May.

"Father Pat has a story for us, so I have curtailed the worship of the fragrant weed on the part of the other men in order that we may hear it," explained the Cardinal.

"How kind of you!" said Lady Fairholme gratefully.

"Is it a fairy story?" asked Grace.

Father Pat laughed.

"Ah, Miss Grace, I deserve a hit, don't I?" he remarked, sitting down beside her.

Grace looked the picture of demure innocence.

"I am not conscious that there was any hit in my remark."

"Dear me, no, of course, what am I thinking of? How should such a Vere de Vere know that Cockneys define as 'fairy tales' what we should call make-ups?"

"But is it a true story or not, Father," laughed Mary. "Not just 'truth for the laity,' I mean, but a really true story."

"Indeed, Miss Mary, it's yourself that's got the sharp tongue, after all. Yes, my dear, it is true. But really there is no story about it, and you will all be disappointed at the absence of plot and finish. His Eminence is apt to jump a little hastily to conclusions."

"Father Pat, you know your slum idylls are incomparable. You know you can always

make us laugh or cry as you please. Now, if you don't begin at once, I will put you down to preach a retreat to the fashionable ladies of St. Elizabeth's Society," laughed the Cardinal.

"Once upon a time," began Father Pat, throwing up his hands in horror at this threat, "there was a child, a boy, who lived in what our august head there would call 'a back slum.'"

"Well, and what would you call it?"

"His life was colourless and featureless, as back-slum lives are apt to be—unless they belong to the criminal clique of that society. But, one day, something happened which changed the whole of his mental horizon. This something was a letter to him from a certain great Prince of the Church, showing how he, impotent child though he was, could co-operate with this great ecclesiastic for the greater good of humanity."

The Cardinal leant forward with an eager look on his magnificent features.

"Father Pat, are you hoaxing a fellow?" he asked, as wistfully as a child. "You know

how near my heart the children are. Don't jest upon that subject to me."

"Your Eminence, may I be suspended if I am jesting. What I am telling you is merely sober truth, if there was ever truth in this world."

"Go on, Father," said Mary excitedly. "Cousin Dorotheus, please don't interrupt again."

"He's a child belonging to my school," continued the old priest. "A most unusual child as far as intellect, heart, and breeding go. A very usual child in his appetite, his taste for games, and his capacity for wearing the knees and elbows of his garments into holes. Well, I need not tell you the subject matter of the Cardinal's letter to the children. We all know it by heart. And the day we received it in our school, I went into the chapel after dinner, and there I found this child, kneeling before the Good Shepherd statue, in a trance of happiness. He was dead to hunger and the passing of time."

"But do children ever feel like that?" interrupted Grace. "I shouldn't have thought

a child would care about helping other people."

Father Pat looked at her gravely, and the Cardinal made a quick movement as if about to answer, then checked himself.

"Miss Grace, how long is it since you were a child yourself? Well, never mind. But those of us who live among children know that there are no more generous lovers of their kind in this world than children, especially the children of the poor. It touches the very highest point of creature love in its passionate devotion and absolutely disinterested unselfishness. It is no uncommon thing to see children far better pleased at the success of a schoolmate than at their own. Ah, if only children could always remain children, and be allowed to rule the philanthropic world, we shouldn't have much need of workhouses and prisons. There is nothing incongruous to me in the fact that the children often make me feel ashamed of myself. Sure, aren't they fresher from the hand of God?"

There was a moment of eloquent silence, and then the old man went on.

"Well, this child, when his first rapture of

happiness was over; set to work in the most practical way to make money for the poor children. He already had enough pocket money a year to more than fulfil the Cardinal's conditions of membership, but this was not enough. With the assistance of a friend in the police force, he obtained a post as paper boy at one and sixpence a week, and that hard-earned wage, together with donations from the good-natured constables, swelled his offerings to gold."

"I remember that boy," cried the Cardinal, as eagerly as if he had been still a boy himself. "He came almost at the end of the whole lot with a very bright young female teacher, and she mentioned his collection specially, and it was done up separately."

Lady Fairholme dropped her knitting.

"So do I remember him! And I remember that teacher too. There was something so unusual about her. I thought at the time how sweet she was. And you put your hand on the boy's head, Dorotheus, the only one you did it to."

"That's the boy—Uriel Adair, by name."

“What a very uncommon name,” murmured Cedric.

“Well, a little while ago, a large competition was got up by the Metropolitan Society for essays from the elementary schools upon the subject—‘What are you going to be when you grow up, and why?’ Uriel entered the lists among others, and won a first prize—a silver watch. General Sir Edwin Noble singled him out for special notice on the prize day, and called him—but I will read you his essay, a copy of which I have kept, and brought with me this evening to show His Eminence. His teacher kindly copied it for me, with original spelling, punctuation, and matter.”

St. Mary’s Boys’ School, North Squire.

“‘In answer to your questshun what I am going to be when I grow up and why I am going to be a cardinal. I used to think I would rather be a pleeseman but now I know I would rather be a cardinal, my reasons are first because I want to help other poor little children who arent as happy as me and have not enuff to eat and no nice beds to lie in. I think a cardinal can help these children better than a

pleeseman. my second reason is because I should like to write a letter to the other children to make them happy by showing them how to help the poor children, the same as the cardinal has written to us. Uriel Adair, aged 10.' ”

“ ‘ P.S.—My third reason is that I like a cardinal’s uniform better than a pleesemans I like red better than dark blue. I am sorry I furgot to put this reason in the beginning part of my letter but as it is only a third reason perhaps it does not matter and there is no time to write it over again as Miss Wright says we only have another five minutes.’ ”

A roar of laughter greeted the conclusion of the essay reading.

“ I am not surprised they gave that a first prize,” said Lord Fairholme. “ It must have been so very unusual. I wonder if any of the other children thought of the same thing? ”

Father Pat shook his head. “ I am sure they didn’t. And this is genuine, mind. It was quite a struggle for the poor child to reveal his heart’s sacred ambition. Ever since then, of course, he has been called the little Cardinal.”

His Eminence had fallen into a reverie. Suddenly he roused himself.

"Do you know all about his people, Father Pat? Did you say he was an orphan? Are his belongings respectable?"

"There is a mystery about his very existence, my lord," answered the old man sadly. "He is fostered by a highly respectable Frenchwoman, a widow, with one son. Uriel was given to her care by his father, an artist, who lived over in Var, and who died there of decline. Unless this good woman has any papers in her possession which she has never shown me, a very unlikely thing, she knows nothing whatever of his antecedents."

"Find that out, and let me know. Do all you can. It might be possible to trace his people, if anyone of position took the matter up. Hitherto I suppose no one but this poor woman has ever tried, and she cannot, of course, afford to spend."

"I will do my best, my lord. It was what you said about the weight of the scarlet that made me think of him. The child little knows what it is he is wishing for."

Again the Cardinal sighed.

“But, as you say, Father Pat, perhaps he will be great-hearted enough to cling to his ideal, whatever it costs him. Who knows. But we must find out more about him, though already we may be practically sure, I suppose, that he is of gentle birth, more or less.”

CHAPTER VI.

Ah, deep in heaven what thunder stirs,
When God seeks out these tender things
Whom, in the shadow where we sleep,
He sends us, clothed about with wings
And finds them—ragged babes that weep.
Victor Hugo.

URIEL, meantime, pursued the usual routine of life, entirely unconscious of the great men interested in his tiny affairs and the problems of his future; unconscious, also, that Father Pat, during his frequent visits to the school, kept a more than commonly tender outlook over the young orphan. But one morning, a few days after the Belgravian dinner party, Uriel was not in his accustomed place, and Father Pat's quick eyes noted this absence directly he came into the room.

"Where is Uriel Adair, Miss Wright?"

"That is just what I want to know, Father. He hasn't been this morning, and there is no message."

"I'll look him up on my rounds this afternoon," said the priest obligingly.

He found Uriel sitting by the fire in the kitchen, looking very pale and dejected, with a strip of scarlet flannel round his throat, while a strong odour of Elliman's Embrocation filled the air. Mère Dubois dusted an already spotless chair, and begged the old priest to be seated.

"Not unless you sit too, *ma mère*. You get more work out of your poor feet in twenty-four hours than I do out of mine; so it is a good excuse to rest them for a bit."

With many grateful protests, the old Frenchwoman finally seated herself, and then proceeded to go volubly into Uriel's case.

"It is a cold, Monsieur l'Abbé, nothing more than a bad cold. But the May winds are treacherous, and I shall not permit him to go out till he is well."

"Quite right, *ma mère*. Keep him from Mass on Sunday if need be. I wish all mothers took such care of their children."

Mère Dubois lifted her hands, shoulders,

and eyebrows ceilingwards, in speechless protest at the ways of English mammas.

"But, Monsieur l'Abbé, it must be recollected that all children do not merit the care that this one merits."

Father Pat laughed.

"Well, well, it's a lucky thing for some of us that we don't get our deserts. You might say, *ma mère*, that sometimes people take more care of other people's children than of their own."

"*Hélas*, that is so! With me, Pierre and Uriel have always been alike, my two dear sons. But, true, I have not had temptation to treat my foster child the best."

"You wouldn't have, if you had," said Father Pat, very gently. "Well, I must be moving on; but I will ask Miss Wright to look in after school to-morrow; and I am sure she will agree with me that that is just the colour a little Cardinal ought to be wearing—though not round his throat," he added, slyly.

Uriel flushed as scarlet as his bandage, and Mère Dubois bridled at the flattering title.

"Stranger things have happened, *le bon*

Dieu knows," she ejaculated, as Father Pat laid a wrinkled hand on the golden head.

Then, to her surprise, instead of walking out through the street door, Father Pat marched straight into her other room, a kind of bed-sitting room, where Pierre and Uriel slept, Mère Dubois herself occupying a chair bedstead in the kitchen. This room was as scrupulously clean as the other one, and Father Pat dropped into a chair before his hostess had time to go through the same unnecessary process of dusting it.

"Now, good mother, tell me if there is anything about this boy's antecedents which I do not already know. Have you, for instance, any papers or anything whatever belonging to his father? And what was his father like?"

"Like Uriel himself, only a man instead of a child," responded Mère Dubois promptly. "A sad, fair face, with a short, pointed beard, as golden as the child's hair. He was a painter, and they lived together in a tiny attic with a big room as studio, at the top of a house near my little farm in Var—not far from Hyères. Hyères was my market town. He used to get

eggs and milk from me for the baby. The poor mother died when Uriel was a year old, and she lies buried in the little churchyard there. The gentleman, Mr. Adair, was father and mother in one to the poor babe; he worshipped the very ground the little feet trod upon. And Uriel was three years old when his father followed the mother to the churchyard."

"How did it happen?"

The old woman lifted her apron to her eyes.

"Terribly, Monsieur l'Abbé. He was killed on a—what do you call those places across the *chemin-de-fer*?"

"Level crossing?"

"*Mais, oui*. He was killed on a level crossing. Never shall I forget that dreadful day. The poor baby, as beautiful as an angel, without either father or mother. What could I do but take him in? The Maire tried to trace the child's relations, but there was nothing, nothing whatever to go upon. So then he said I should keep the child, as it was better than sending him to the workhouse. And he gave the poor gentleman's furniture—little enough

of it—and his clothes, and the pictures he had sold for me, but they only fetched a little. And I have kept the dear child ever since. I was well off then, with a husband and a thriving farm, and I little thought I should ever leave the sunny Mediterranean to come to this land of muddy seas and skies.”

“And why did you come?” asked Father Pat, too much interested to notice the insult to his native climate.

“Ah, Monsieur l’Abbé, why? I often ask myself that question. *Le bon Dieu* knows. My husband died when Pierre was still a child, and I had a bad year with the farm, losing the best of my stock with some terrible disease that devastated the cattle that year. Then my sister, my only sister, had married an Englishman, and was living here in London, and she persuaded me to come over. So, with the two boys, I came; and here I have been ever since. And, thanks to the good God, I have never had to ask charity once all that time.”

“I don’t know how you did it,” and Father Pat shook his head.

“An Englishwoman could not have done it;

but we French, we manage better, and make things out of so little. Ah, the extravagance of the English poor! And then, lace work, Monsieur l'Abbé; it is well paid and costs little to make. I have worked all the time for one West End firm, and have done well. It was work which I could do at home with the little ones; and often I have gone on my knees to thank the good God that the dear Sister taught me that work when I was a girl at school. Soeur Clothilde always said I was her best pupil, though the good soul little thought her lessons would one day mean three lives."

There was a short silence.

"And now that Pierre is just free of school, and apprenticed to the printing——," she was beginning, when Father Pat roused himself from a reverie.

"I see. Do you know anything at all of Mr. Adair's history?"

"Very little, Monsieur l'Abbé. He told me once that his family had never forgiven him his marriage with a Catholic, and that they never would. 'We are dead to each other for good—or bad,' he used to say, with his sweet,

sad smile. 'They have sworn never to forgive me, and when we Adairs swear a thing, it's like the law of the Medes and Persians.' Those were his words. I know not what he meant."

"What was his Christian name?"

"Robin."

"And his wife's?"

"Inez? Yes, Inez is on the stone in the churchyard. They buried them both in the same grave. I did not know her. She died soon after they first came to Var, before I knew them by sight even."

"Inez? Was she Spanish?"

"I do not know. The child's dark eyes look like it. His father's eyes were blue. That is the only difference between them."

"It is partly that characteristic which gives Uriel his uncommon look. Do you know where they were married?"

Mère Dubois reflected.

"In Paris. Yes, at the Madeleine, in Paris; for I remember one day speaking of that church, and he said he had been married there. It is a sad story, Monsieur l'Abbé."

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"Very. There were no enquiries from relatives after the accident, I suppose?"

"None at all. It would not be in any of the foreign papers, a little thing like that. And he was English, and perhaps the lady was Spanish, so it might never have been seen."

"No, of course not. And, another thing, we aren't sure that Adair was his real name. One could see the certificates, I suppose, of her death, and the marriage, and Uriel's birth."

"Those would all be in France, Monsieur; not easy to see from here."

Father Pat noted down some particulars in pencil, and then rose to go.

"What sort of a man was Mr. Adair? A gentleman?"

"*Mais, oui*, Monsieur l'Abbé. Look at his son. A prince could not have better manners, a finer presence, or a gentler heart. He is no common child."

"I would give a good deal to find his people, *ma mère*. The first step is to get the registers searched for the verification of names. Good-

bye, my child, and thank you for your patience in answering my questions. I had an idea the father died of decline."

"*Mais, non.* That is a lingering disease, when he would have had time to make some preparations for leaving the sweet babe. No, it was the sudden death which made it all so difficult."

A few days later Uriel was pronounced to be quite well and was allowed to resume his newspaper round, a task which he had reluctantly delegated to a reliable friend for a week. When he had finished, the first evening, instead of returning home, he pursued his way up Golden Court to a wretched-looking house at the top, and then paused to think.

"I am sure I ought to go after Alice Smith. I thought at first I might leave it till I am a big man, but now I see I mustn't. I saw it when the dear Cardinal was talking to us on Good Shepherd Sunday, and when that nice General said I mustn't be a coward. I don't like going one bit, but I must."

So, from irresolute loitering, he wheeled round, ran through an open door, and creeping

noiselessly upstairs, knocked at the top back room.

"Come in," said a child's voice.

Uriel entered, glanced hurriedly around, and was relieved to find the object of his quest in solitude. She was a girl about his own age, but terribly undersized and pale, with an expression of shrinking fear on her little drawn face and in her unnaturally large eyes which would have told its own tale to a keen observer.

She jumped up, with an expression of terror, as Uriel entered.

"Oh, wot 'ave you come for? Father'll kill you if 'e finds you 'ere."

"He won't find me," returned her visitor stoutly. "I have come to bring you a jolly red apple. Look!"

Alice's face relaxed into a faint smile.

"You are kind! Wot made yer do it?"

"Why, I thought you must be rather dull up here. I know where you live because I have often watched you go in from school. You don't go to my school, do you?"

Alice shook her head.

"No. I go ter the Board, down Archway

Street. Father won't let me go ter your school, 'cos 'e ses 'e don't want no nuns and priests pokin' their noses into 'is place."

"Don't any people ever come to see you, then?"

Again Alice shook her head.

"'Oo is ther ter come? Father won't let me go to no Sunday school. I don't know anybody but my teacher, and she ain't kind. 'Sides she ain't got no time to go visitin'."

"Is your father kind?" asked Uriel, after a pause.

"Kind! Why, 'e's the devil!"

Uriel shrank back in horror. Even his calm nerves were not proof against such a shock.

"Oh, Alice, what a wicked thing to say!"

"I'm not swearing" whimpered the child. "Straight, 'e's the devil; 'e ses so, and I b'lieve 'im. 'E ses if I ever tell anybody anything, or run away from 'im, 'e'll send me down to 'ell. 'E drinks, you know. 'E comes 'ome drunk nearly every night. But 'e ain't ever loud drunk, so no one in the 'ouse takes any notice. 'E just sits up 'arf the night by the fire, talking. 'E ses 'e's talking to other devils; and

oh, it's crool to 'ear 'im. I 'ardly ever get a good-night, an' 'e locks the door so's I can't go and sit on the stairs. I tried to once. Oh, you don't know 'ow 'e carries on. Sometimes 'e ses the floor is covered with snakes, and 'ollers out to me that there is a black snake on my bed. And——"

"But why don't you run away?" exclaimed Uriel, pale with disgust.

"I dursn't. Besides, w'ere could I run to? The p'leece 'ud find me, and take me to the work'us, and then they'd find father, and 'e'd kill me. Oh, I didn't ought to 'ave told yer! Why did yer come? Now, you've made me tell, and I shall go ter 'ell, if I tell."

Uriel looked desperately round the room for inspiration, then pulled a rumpled picture out of his pocket.

"Look here, Alice, he can't send you to hell, and he is not the devil. It is silly to believe that. The devil is not a man. He is quite different."

"Are you sure?" sobbed the child.

"Certain sure," replied Uriel firmly.
"They teach us all about the devil and hell

at our school, if they don't at yours; and I know all about it."

Alice wiped away her tears, and gazed yearningly at the possessor of such invaluable knowledge.

"No one has any power to send you to hell. You can only get there through your own fault, by doing some big, big sin. If your father killed your body, he can't kill your soul. Look here, keep this picture. It's one of the Good Shepherd my teacher gave me for saying four chapters of the catechism without a miss. That little lamb is what you might be if only you would come with me; it's safe in the Good Shepherd's arms."

"I daren't come, oh, I daren't. Father would find me wherever I went. 'E said once if I was to git put to a school, 'e would wait till the children went for their walk and git me then. You don't know 'im."

Uriel gazed, hopeless and helpless. He felt as if an immense weight had been tied to him.

"Well, do keep the picture," he said at last. "And look at it to comfort you. It

will show you what you might be, and how God——”

“I don’t believe in God,” interrupted the girl. “If ther’ was a God, ’ow could ’e sit down and let me so wretched? ’Tain’t my fault, any of it. There ain’t no God; can’t be.”

Again poor Uriel stared aghast. Then he made a supreme effort after hope and comfort.

“Alice, it is wicked to talk like that. You forget all the little children that God is good to. And God is waiting to save you, and wants to save you, if only you will tell, or let me tell. It is your fault for not telling.”

“’Ow *can* I tell if I’m goin’ ter be killed, and go ter ’ell?” she wailed. “I wish you’d never come. I wish——”

Suddenly she broke off, and her face became almost idiotic with terror.

“There’s father. Run, run! And promise you won’t tell anyone. Promise!”

Uriel hesitated. A promise was a sacred thing, and he did not want to seal his lips against any chance of rescue for this poor lost lamb.

Alice seized his arm and shook him in a frenzy of fear.

"Promise! You cruel beast, you only came to make things wuss fer me!"

"I didn't!" cried Uriel, clasping her in his arms, and, much to her astonishment, giving her a passionate kiss. "I came to make them better. I promise. There! Now, will you let me come again?"

"Oh, yes, if you will be careful. Do go!"

She pushed him bodily out of the room, and he only had time to reach the middle landing and squeeze into a recess there before Smith's heavy step went past him up the dark stairs. Uriel shuddered, even at being so near him in the open. What must it be to be shut up all night with such a man?

He crept home with a sinking heart. Indeed, so great was his misery that he seemed to have lost his own identity. He did not feel in the least like the boy who had run into the house half an hour before. He was shocked, bewildered, utterly at sea.

This first personal encounter with human cruelty and adult power seemed to shut out the

other side of the picture. To the child mind, the *power* of adults is a terrible thing, explaining that otherwise inexplicable enigma of why children endure torments in silence.

The figure of her father seemed to Uriel to fill all Alice's world, with its gigantic size and strength, to stand, an immovable fortress, between her and salvation. Besides the sacred nature of a promise, Uriel felt too the danger to which he was exposing Alice by betraying her confidence. He knew nothing of the law, nor of the societies which put the law into operation on behalf of suffering children. The one overpowering idea that filled his mind was that, as long as he held his tongue, the poor child was safe; directly he should speak, it would lay her open to the chance of being murdered. Supposing he told Father Pat or Beauty; and supposing they went to take Alice away; supposing, then, they were not quick enough, and her father caught them. Or, supposing they did get her safely away, even to a home, how would it be possible to hide from the man, her whereabouts? Somehow he would find it out, and kill her. The

poor little would-be saviour could see no way out of it but silence. Silence, at least, was safe. Speech was fraught with many possible catastrophies.

CHAPTER VII

Mouth sweeter than cherries,
Keen eyes as of Mars,
Browner than berries
And brighter than stars.
Nor colour nor wordy
Weak song can declare
His stature how sturdy,
How stalwart his air.

A. C. Swinburne.

LATE one Saturday night, very soon after poor Uriel's first personal encounter with cruelty and sin, there came a letter for Father Pat; a dainty-looking letter, written in a delicate, artistic hand upon thick vellum paper, with its Belgravian address stamped upon it in scarlet.

It ran as follows:—

“ ‘DEAR FATHER PAT,

“ ‘I am going to ask you to do me a great favour, and to give me, oh! such a pleasure.’

“ ‘Dear me, what is coming at all?’” murmured the old man, in parenthesis.

“ ‘ It is to let the little Cardinal come to tea with us to-morrow, Sunday.’

Father Pat gave vent to a whistle, and dropped the letter on his shabby writing table. After a bit he shook his head and continued reading.

“ ‘ You don’t know how I am longing to see him and talk to him. I know it would be no use calling at his home, because his foster-mother would be there, and she would want to do all the talking, which would not suit me at all, because I want to study the child. Besides, I think it would be a treat for him, and I am sure he deserves a treat even more than I do, though you know, Father, I never refused anything for your poor people yet, that you asked me to do.’

Father Pat’s face softened, but still he shook his head.

“ ‘ Mother and Father will be at home, and so will Cedric. We all want to see him. Grace says it will be a new sensation to sit down to table with a backslumsman—though probably not in the way she thinks. Don’t say “ No,” *padre mio*, but arrive to-morrow as early after

your catechism as you can get away, bringing the little Cardinal with you. You won't have time to answer this, and if you disappoint me I shall never smile again.

“ ‘ Your spoilt child,

“ ‘ MARY FAIRHOLME.’ ”

“ Well, well; what's a poor soggarth to think at all? Treat for the boy? Yes, but too much of a treat, perhaps. How will the shabby home look after the Fairholmes' palace? And then, supposing that the first sight of gentle life should rouse his natural inborn instincts for it? A doubtful experiment, Father Pat, and yet you know quite well you can't say 'No.' That's been your worst weakness all your life. Yes, I suppose I must take him. But I wash my hands of the consequences.”

Next morning, after the Children's Mass, Uriel received a message that Father Pat was waiting to speak to him in the sacristy.

The child went in, still robed in his black cassock, white cotta, and clean turn-down collar. He had been mourning all the week over his poor little protégée away at the top of

Golden Court, and the anxiety had painted delicate bluish shadows under the great dark eyes.

Father Pat looked down at him for a time without speaking.

"Well, little acolyte," he said at last, with something very like a sigh, "and how's the throat?"

"Quite well, thank you, Father," answered the boy, with his usual sweet smile.

"No need for any more cardinal bandages, eh?"

"No, Father. But Mère Dubois was so pleased with what you said, that she bought me this little red tie to wear on Sundays. It cost sixpence-three-farthings."

"What? A scarlet one? So it is! Bless me, child, you will be coming to serve Mass in a stock next! But what I sent for you for was to know if you will come out to tea with me this afternoon to a lady's house, a long way from here. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, you know. And as you are a good boy, you must have a treat sometimes, else what's the use of being good? So, if you like

to come, be here at four sharp, directly after catechism."

Uriel's face lighted up with pleasure and astonishment, but before he could give voice to his delight, Father Pat hustled him off to disrobe.

Punctually at four o'clock the two set off together and reached Belgravia at five. They were conducted to the drawing room by an impassive butler, and Father Pat kept a sharp eye on his charge. The child, however, was too utterly unconscious of himself and too much absorbed in all that he saw, to feel nervous or ill at ease. Mère Dubois, like a sensible woman, had not spent an hour before his departure in volubly reciting "musts" and "mustn'ts," with which the lives of children are made a burden to them, before an outing, and their otherwise natural, happy ways destroyed by a nervous self-consciousness. And being also ignorant of the raking criticism to which he would soon be subjected, Uriel felt no anxious desire to propitiate and please. He stood composedly by Father Pat, falling back a little, while the priest greeted the ladies.

Then, upon being presented to each, he made a lowly inclination—the inclination he had been taught to make to his fellow-acolyte while serving Mass—and, even to Father Pat's astonishment, kissed each lady's hand. To Lord Fairholme and Cedric he made the same bow and gave the same sweet smile. Then he stood still, awaiting further developments.

For the moment, his hostesses were taken aback. They had not expected such manners or such composure, or, indeed, such a well-bred looking little visitor. Lady Fairholme had seen him for a few minutes at Archbishop's House, where she had been struck with him, even though he was then shabbily dressed and among a crowd of other children. To-day he was attired in a black velvet suit and breeches, very shabby and plushed, but perfectly clean—a suit which his devoted foster-mother had bought for him, second-hand. This, with the turn-down collar and scarlet tie, gave him an unusual appearance, and contrasted well with the dark, brilliant, star-like eyes and the masses of pale gold hair. Then, he stood so erect and sturdy, with each graceful limb unconsciously

posed to the best advantage, while the watch-chain across his tunic front gave the finishing touch to the air of manliness. The ladies had expected an inferior, and, behold, here was an equal.

At last Mary came to the rescue.

"We are so glad to see you, Uriel," she said, taking him by the hand and leading him to a sofa. "We heard about you from Father Pat, and he told us about the watch you won a little while ago."

Uriel beamed, and stroked the steel chain lovingly.

"Oh, you have it on! Show! What a jolly one, isn't it, Cedric?" she exclaimed, turning to her brother, who was standing by, with a smile on his good-tempered face.

"I should think so—especially for a little chap like you. I know I should have thought myself jolly lucky to have had such a watch at the age of ten."

Uriel smiled up at him, then cast a grave glance at Grace, who had thought proper to seat herself at some distance.

"Now, I think we had better all go down

and have tea," said Lady Fairholme. "Grace," she added, in an aside, as the others were leaving the room, "if you can't behave like a lady, and if you make that poor, beautiful, gentle child uncomfortable, I shall send you out of the room, grown-up young woman though you are."

The girl rose, red with passion.

"Pray don't trouble to do that. If I am not fit to associate with a little gutter-snipe, I will have tea alone up here."

So the one discordant element was removed almost before the child had become conscious of it, and Lady Fairholme felt a sense of relief as she joined the party in the dining room, where a regular schoolroom tea had been prepared.

Uriel said his little grace very placidly to himself—he was so perfectly unconscious that he was the centre of notice—then climbed up into the heavy oak chair, and looked round the laden table with a sigh of absolute happiness.

"Are you very hungry?" laughed Mary, who was pouring out tea.

"*Very*, madam," with contented emphasis.

"What will you begin on, then?" asked Lord Fairholme, passing a plate of hot buttered scones. "Perhaps you don't care for buttered cakes, though, and would rather have jam?"

"Thank you, sir, I love butter. We always have it on Sundays for tea, as a treat."

Lady Fairholme exchanged glances with her daughter.

"Butter is much dearer than jam or treacle, and is a rare treat to the poor," explained Father Pat in French. "I always have to provide twice as much butter as jam for my school treats. Bless my thick old head, I forgot the little beggar could chatter French a great deal better than I can," he added with dismay, as Uriel looked across at him with a confirmatory smile.

"Yes, it is a treat, Father," he agreed simply. He could not see why Father Pat should have spoken in French. "But, still, I like jam very much, too, especially strawberry jam."

The jam in the cut-glass dishes was strawberry.

"What a little gentleman," murmured Lady Fairholme in the priest's ear.

The old man nodded.

"That sort of thing is quite common among the poor, even the ordinary poor. It is 'breeding'—not what we call the acquired veneer of 'good manners.' It is kindness, unselfishness, thought for others. As a race, the poor are infinitely kinder than we are. That is why they are so much better bred."

Lady Fairholme laughed indulgently.

"And there isn't any doubt about his being of gentle birth, either," continued the old priest. "And no doubt blood must go for something among bipeds, just as it does among quadrupeds. Then, in addition to his other advantages, he has also possessed a Spanish mother and has been educated by a Frenchwoman whose manners would grace a palace, besides all of which, his school teacher happens to be a lady."

"Who is Beauty?" Lord Fairholme was asking at the other end of the table.

Uriel laid down his knife.

"He is a policeman. His real name is Hanford, and his number is Y 515."

"But why do you call him Beauty?"

"Everyone does. Lots of people don't know his real name. And there is another policeman that they call the Beast. Beauty and the Beast, you see."

A roar of laughter greeted this remark.

"Does the Beast mind? And does Beauty mind?" asked Mary.

Uriel shook his head.

"I don't think so, madam."

"Probably it wouldn't make an ounce of difference if they did," said Cedric. "But is Beauty good-looking?"

"Yes; and the Beast is ugly. But he can't help it, you know," Uriel added apologetically. "I don't think Beauty is always happy. His home is in Devonshire, by the sea. Sometimes he tells me about the cows and ponies and chickens——"

"In the sea?"

Uriel dimpled.

"Oh, of course not. But besides being near the sea, his home is a farm as well. And he

says he wonders if he ever shall see anything again but sooty bricks and mortar; and then he looks ever so far away over the houses, and doesn't hear when you speak to him."

"Poor Beauty," sighed Mary. "How I should like to see him! But, tell me, Uriel, have you ever seen the sea?"

Her guest shook his golden head.

"No, madam, never. I do not remember the crossing from France; and it was at night, too, in the dark. Mère Dubois tells me, and I often try to make pictures of it in my head."

"He can tell you all about the tides and the currents and the Gulf Stream, and the constituents of salt water, and all that stuff," broke in Father Pat, "but he has never seen it."

Lady Fairholme sighed, and Uriel turned his whole attention once more to his tea.

The meal he made that evening was a thing never forgotten by the family. Calmly and steadily he worked his way from one dish to another, not an item being omitted. Then he joined his hands together, bowed his head, and said another short grace.

"That's a tea worth giving thanks for, isn't it, boy?" laughed Father Pat, as they rose. "Now, as Lady Fairholme is very fond of music, I think it would be a nice little return if you sang something—unless you are too crowded."

"No, Father, I am not at all too crowded, thank you. Shall I sing the 'Wings of a dove?'"

"Oh, yes! Shall I accompany you?" asked Mary.

"If you please, madam."

They returned to the drawing room, and, unimpaired by the tea, the high clear boy voice rang through the room. Every note was perfectly true and beautifully rendered.

"He is one of my leading choir boys," said Father Pat, with laudable pride, when he had finished. "And, thank goodness, that bogey, the crack, in his case can't bother us for some years yet. Now, I am truly sorry to say good-bye, but we must go, or what will become of my evening service?"

There was an outcry at this, and good-natured Cedric promised to see the little Car-

dinal safely home, if only he might stay. But this offer was met with another enquiry—what would become of the solos in the evening service? So the leave-takings were made, the child offering his thanks with an earnestness which put the last touch to his conquest.

“I never saw such an absolutely sweet child,” exclaimed Lady Fairholme, with a rare enthusiasm. “Cedric, you were a little bear at his age, compared to him.”

“I’ve no doubt I was,” laughed her son. “He made me feel a big bear to-night. His manners are those of the typical Spanish troubadour.”

“And yet he is such a thorough boy,” laughed Mary. “Did you ever see such a tea—even at an East End treat?”

* * * * *

“Well, boy, and how did you enjoy yourself?” asked Father Pat, as soon as they were settled outside their homeward bus.

“Oh, awfully, Father. It was the jolliest tea I ever had in my life; nicer even than the Christmas teas. I wish poor Pierre and Mère Dubois and Beauty could have been there.”

"And did you like the ladies?"

"Oh, yes, Father, except the one who was only there a few minutes. She looked proud, and Mère Dubois says it is rude to be proud."

"Was it Mère Dubois who taught you to kiss the ladies' hands like that?"

"Yes, Father. Was it not right?"

"Very much so. And did you like the gentlemen?"

"Oh, yes, Father; they were so kind. And I liked the pictures, and the birds, and the flowers, and the lovely rings the ladies wore. They were like the colours of the stained glass window over the high altar."

"How would you like to go and live there?" asked Father Pat nervously.

He felt the question was incautious, but he was morbidly anxious to see if the expedition to Belgravia had been as corrupting as he had feared.

Uriel opened his eyes wide with astonishment.

"Oh no, Father, I shouldn't like to give up your school and Mère Dubois and Miss Wright and Pierre, and Beauty—and you,

Father. It would not be the same thing to live there, would it, Father?"

"No," answered the priest, with a sigh of relief. "It would not be the same thing at all, my child."

CHAPTER VIII

If ever child stood peerless,
Love knows that child is you.

A. C. Swinburne.

THE weeks and months passed away. Whitsuntide holidays, midsummer holidays—that season of varied pain and pleasure, when lucky people are away to seaside and moorland, and unlucky ones continue to breathe the used-up city air. Then, at last, September came, with its shorter days and cooler nights. School re-opened this month, and the boys were unfeignedly glad to begin the regular routine again. Uriel had grown during the holidays, and was paler and more ethereal looking, his teacher thought. As a matter of fact, he had been regularly visiting Alice, who now worshipped him with the whole strength of a tortured heart loving its first object. In this, he felt a crumb of comfort, for his friendship was clearly such a sheet-anchor

to her that he was able, from it, to coax her into a belief in God. Kindness, patience, and courage were doing their work in the poor little atheist, but, all the same, her condition and his contact with helpless suffering, was gradually eating into the great child-heart. Again and again he begged her to let him tell Father Pat, or to run away to the Cardinal, but her terror at such suggestions did not in the least yield, and Uriel dared not expose her to danger. All he could do was to instruct her, cheer her, befriended her, pray for her, and hope for happier developments in the future, while the responsibility of the matter made him old and grave beyond his years.

One morning, a few days after school reopened, he was sitting idly before a slateful of completed sums, waiting for his slower classmates to have finished too, when Thomas Kieley burst in, with an indecent amount of noise, even for him. Miss Wright looked severely up at his rowdy entrance, but for once the scholastic influence failed in its effect.

"Teacher, Uriel's wanted quick, sharp. Ther' ain't 'arf a toff down at 'is place arsking

fer Uriel Adair, and old Mare Dewboys is blubbin' like a good 'un. She arst me ter tell you and let 'im go."

Uriel jumped up, white to the lips, with a sickening sensation at his heart. Supposing Smith *had* found out that poor little Alice had told, and had "done for her" after all? They would be sure to come to him because he was known to her. What else could any "toff" want with him? And for what other reason could Mère Dubois be crying?

He looked eagerly at Miss Wright, who, in her turn, eyed Tommy.

"Thomas Kieley, I feel inclined to address you in your own incomparable language, and ask you if you see any green in this 'ere eye? But I suppose a mere teacher must not be allowed such lingual luxuries. Perhaps you will kindly explain why you are an hour late, and why you think I am likely to believe such a story? It is not the first time I have had to deal with truants."

Tommy's excitement vanished like breath from a mirror.

"Teacher, I wouldn't kid yer, straight. I

wouldn't," he cried, in genuine distress. "Look, 'ave I ever kidded yer yet?"

"Well, no, I am bound to admit you have not."

"No, an' I wouldn't neither. Straight, there is a toffish bloke wanting Uriel, and the ole woman arst me ter come fer 'im, 'cos I should get 'ere much quicker'n 'er, and she didn't want to leave the toff alone, neither."

"Very well, Uriel, you may go. No, Tommy, I cannot allow him an escort. You would not be allowed inside if the gentleman has come on business, so what would be the good of going?"

Uriel hurried out of the dingy room, where he had spent so many happy hours, little thinking he would never again re-enter it as a scholar, or that when he did re-enter it, his future would have changed beyond the wildest dreams of the most audacious imagination. He arrived at his own door, breathless with haste and agitation, to find Mère Dubois sobbing in a chair, with an apron over her head, while a tall, extremely well-dressed gentleman stood looking through a bundle of papers, obviously

not at all enjoying himself. The gentleman was so very large and, as Tommy had said, such a "toff," that he appeared to fill the whole room.

He looked up as Uriel entered, stared very hard for a moment, then smiled and held out his hand as the child snatched off his cap and made his quaint little bow.

"How do you do? I have some very great news for you, and I hope you will agree with me, pleasant news. But I must not tell you too suddenly, I suppose, for people say that pleasant news can be a shock just as bad news can."

Uriel sighed with relief. He did not understand all that the large gentleman said, but he gathered enough to know that nothing could have happened to poor little Alice.

"No doubt," the large gentleman went on, "there are many things you would like, are there not?"

Uriel considered, then assented.

"Yes, quite so. Such as a nice house to live in, and a house by the seaside as well, and a pony to ride, and plenty to eat, and so on?"

Uriel's great eyes widened with astonishment. The large gentleman certainly was very strange to come and talk of such things in Golden Court.

"Yes, sir; I should like all that, especially the pony. But I think I should like money best of all, because then I could do such a lot with it for the poor children."

"Ah, yes, exactly," acquiesced the large gentleman, catching eagerly at this suggestion, previously to which he had appeared to be at a loss how to proceed. "You could do a lot for other people, of course. The best way to help other people is to be rich and powerful. Well, I am glad to say, you have now all these things. You are not going to live here any longer. You are coming away with me to your proper home, under your proper title. Your grandfather, Lord Adair of Porthnedler, died three months ago, and we have been all that time tracing you as his heir. Your father was his only son, and as he is now dead, *you* are Lord Uriel Adair, Baron Porthnedler."

Here Mère Dubois cast away her apron and appeared, her face glazed with tears.

“ Ah, *bon Dieu*, to think of it! Did I not always say the child was fit to be a milor, and now my poor weak words have come true! Ah, little Lord Uriel, how glad I am for thy sake, how glad, how glad!”

Here she became inarticulate again, and the large gentleman took out another paper.

“ I was requested to give you this letter from the late Lord Adair’s solicitors, showing that there is no mistake as to the identity of the child. And I was also requested to ask you to allow me to take him to their office at once, for a time, as they naturally want to see him. One member of our firm—in fact, I believe, two—are his guardians.”

“ You want me to go with you now?” asked Uriel, again turning very pale. “ But you will let me come back?”

“ Oh, yes, for a day or two, no doubt,” answered the gentleman hesitatingly. “ But I should like you to come at once if you are ready.”

This roused Mère Dubois, once and for all.

“ But he is not ready,” she exclaimed, jumping up. “ If monsieur would give himself the

pain of waiting ten minutes, while we go into the next room, the child will then be better fit to be seen."

"Monsieur" bowed to the inevitable, craved permission to light a cigar, and Uriel was hustled off, soaped, rinsed, towelled, and hurried into his little velvet suit, with the white collar and scarlet tie.

When he emerged from this ordeal, the tall gentleman eyed him with still greater approval, and they set out, hand in hand. At the exit of the court, Uriel paused and looked appealingly up in his protector's face.

"Well, what is it?"

"If I might—if you have time—just to let me go in and tell Miss Wright why I shan't be at school this afternoon."

Mr. Sinclair was a kind man, with plenty of leisure time on his hands that day, and an extremely novel case out of which, as it was eminently unlikely to happen again in a life time, it was politic to extract as much interest as possible. So he acquiesced, and followed his little charge through the open school doorway into the shabby room.

"Please, Miss Wright, I am very sorry. I shan't be able to come to school this afternoon, and perhaps never again," began Uriel, with a quiver in his voice. "This gentleman has come to take me away to be a lord."

It is safe to say that never in North Square School had there been such a sensation as that caused by Uriel's announcement.

One voice—Thomas's—soared triumphant above the babel.

"Ther' yer are! Didn't I tell yer 'e wos a toff?"

"What!" gasped Miss Wright. "Uriel, are you mad?"

Here Mr. Sinclair came forward to quell the tumult. His appearance produced a dead and instantaneous silence.

"It is quite correct," he began nervously. "This is Lord Uriel Adair, Baron of Porthnedler, grandson of the late Mr. Percivale Adair, who received a peerage in recognition of his scientific discoveries."

A curious noise in the doorway interrupted him. It was half sob, half laugh. They turned hastily and saw Father Pat.

At the sight of this familiar figure, Uriel sprang forward, hurled himself into the old priest's arms, and burst into a passion of tears.

"Oh, Father, Father, they are going to take me away to be a lord, and I shall never serve your Mass or sing in the choir any more."

Father Pat did not answer for a moment. He was busy hugging the little figure and clearing his throat, which had suddenly become very husky. Then he unclasped the clinging arms and turned to Mr. Sinclair.

"You must excuse him, sir. Old associations are strong, and the unknown is great."

"I am the last person, reverend sir, to reproach fidelity. As you seem specially attached to my charge, and have probably known him longer than anyone else of position, perhaps you would like to come with us to Messrs. Abraham and Moss? We are on our way there now."

"There is nothing I should like better."

So, after all, in making his first great plunge into his new life, Uriel held the hand of an old friend instead of that of a stranger.

Arrived at the legal offices in Lincoln's Inn,

they were ushered through to an inner sanctum, where a severe but venerable looking old gentleman rose to greet them. He looked hard at Uriel, then opened another door, calling, "Moss, come here." In answer to the summons there appeared another gentleman, much younger, and with remarkably red hair. He shook hands warmly with Father Pat, and then, like everyone else, stared hard at poor Uriel.

"So this is my ward, eh? Well, and how do you like being a lord?"

"Not at all, sir, so far," answered Uriel, looking up at him with tear-stained eyes.

"Not at all, eh? Well, that's a pity, seeing it's a misfortune which can't be cured and must be endured. You will like it better later on, though."

He then turned away and conversed with Mr. Abraham and Mr. Sinclair, the latter reporting in full his visit to Golden Court.

"Well," said the senior partner at last, addressing Father Pat, "we are exceedingly indebted to you, Mr. Lonergan, for your pastoral care of the child, and also for your kind-

ness in coming here this morning. No doubt you would like to hear full particulars. As you are probably aware, Lord Adair died three months ago. No? Well, perhaps you have something better to do than to read the newspapers much. Anyway, die he did, leaving no near relative. His only son, the father of this child, had gone abroad many years before, and had been entirely lost sight of. There had been a foolish but serious rupture between himself and his father on the subject of the son's marriage with a well-born but impecunious young Spanish lady. It has been the business of the solicitors, ourselves, to trace the next-of-kin, which we have at last done——”

“Thanks to His Eminence the Cardinal,” put in Father Pat.

“Quite so. We obtained the first clue from His Eminence's solicitors, who, upon seeing our advertisement, wrote informing us that a child named Adair, apparently superior to his then surroundings, had been brought from abroad, and so on. It seems His Eminence is much interested in the boy on account of his unusual proficiency and his having won a

public prize of some importance this year. So we followed up the clue, sent to France, saw copies of the marriage certificates, death certificates, and the grave. We also obtained the birth and baptismal certificates of Lord Uriel here, whose extraordinary likeness to his family also confirms the other evidence. The only difference is that his eyes are dark instead of blue, owing, no doubt, to the Spanish half of his blood."

"Great events spring from small causes," mused Father Pat. "If I hadn't happened to mention this child to His Eminence some time ago, and to get for him the information which he passed on to his solicitors, humanly speaking, it is improbable that Uriel would ever have been found."

"Quite so. We legal men come across interesting and strange stories in the course of business."

"It seems strange," continued Father Pat, "that Mr. Adair should have buried himself so completely, considering the future prospects of his son, from which no amount of family feuds could have debarred him."

"You forgot," said Mr. Moss with a smile, "there were no prospects then. When Robin Adair left England, his father was only an ordinary scientific man, intent upon apparently profitless discoveries. No one could imagine that he would suddenly become famous and get a royal birthday honour, which, certainly, he did deserve. And then, again, poor Mr. Adair's death was so sudden. If he had lived until after his father's peerage had been granted, no doubt he would have made some sign."

"That's true," smiled the old priest. "After all, I'm better in Golden Court, teaching the catechism to the children, than I am here in the legal world, making objections to such learned gentlemen as yourselves. Still, if you will be patient a little longer with a stupid old man, I cannot understand why Lord Adair did not try to trace his son."

"He did. And he actually succeeded in tracing them to Var itself, but failed to trace them back again to England. You see, Lord Adair only lived three months after his new honours, and three months is a short time in

which to trace people in a foreign land. After this child, the next of kin is a distant cousin—a mild old clergyman in the north of Scotland, who appears to take scarcely any interest in such passing things as titles and landed property. He is an extraordinary specimen of unworldliness, and is very well off himself. He will be honestly glad that the heir has turned up, so that he may be left in peace to his books and meditations.”

“May I ask some practical questions now?” enquired Father Pat. “With whom is little Lord Adair to live, and how does his grandfather’s will stand regarding property, and so on?”

“It is a very impartial will. He leaves everything to the heir, the interest, that is, of course, not the capital. The capital and the landed property is all tied up and entailed. Lord Adair did it all, thoroughly and promptly, and evidently intended to create a noble family on a solid basis. He was a very wealthy man. Well, and if the heir were a minor, Moss and myself are guardians, and there are two trustees and executors as well.

We have practically decided amongst us that Lord Adair will reside with Mr. Moss, as he is the younger and livelier of the two guardians. And we think that, as the property must be kept up, the best arrangement will be for Mr. Moss to live in it with the heir. Otherwise it would be necessary to keep up separate establishments, which would involve a big annual outlay to no purpose. The town house is in Park Lane, and the country seat is Porthnedler Court, a village in South Cornwall which Mr. Adair bought some years ago. Both houses are quite ready for occupation at a moment's notice, as we kept on the servants for a time, hoping to be able to settle things."

"Very good," said Father Pat, rising, "now for the most important question of all. What about the child's faith? His grandfather, I understand, was a non-Catholic; his nearest relative is a clergyman of the Scotch Church; and you gentlemen are—are——"

"Jews, neither more nor less," said Mr. Moss, with a twinkle. "I respect you for your anxiety, sir, but pray make your mind easy on

that point. Legally, as guardians, we are bound to educate the boy in the religion of his father, who was, as you know, a convert to the Church of Rome, in which faith he had his child baptised and educated. But, even apart from the clear legality of the matter, we should, as men, regard the father's obvious wishes as sacred. The late Lord Adair made no stipulation whatever about religion, so clearly it was not that point which caused the rupture between him and his son. While, as for the Rev. Stuart Adair, the child will probably not see him oftener than once a year or so; though, even if they lived together, I do not think he could be considered dangerous. In all probability we shall not send Lord Adair to school for some years at any rate, but we shall engage a private tutor for him, a man of his own faith, and, possibly, a priest."

"I see; and I thank you with all my heart. May the child return with me now?"

"Oh, well, yes, if you wish it, he may return for one night. But I fear we must take possession of him for good to-morrow. So make

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the most of your time, youngster," said Mr. Abraham, shaking him kindly by the hand. "Eat, drink, and make merry, for to-morrow—you will have to come and be a lord in earnest."

CHAPTER IX

Let your love have us in its heavenly keeping
To life's last end.

A. C. Swinburne.

WHEN Uriel had been a month in his new circumstances, he began to feel more reconciled to them. Mr. and Mrs. Moss were very kind to him, and he liked his tutor, Mr. Luton-Hayes, who was young, talented, an Oxford man, and already devoted to his small pupil. Then, too, it was very fascinating to live in a huge house, exquisitely appointed, with a large staff of male and female servants to minister to all his various wants. He enjoyed, best of all, the meals, the riding, and the possession of a lovely little suite of rooms of his very own. But often he longed for the class of rough, cheery boys, led by their bright young teacher, for dear old Father Pat and Mère Dubois, for his server's place at Mass, and for his solos in the evening service.

One evening, as he was riding home to tea, with his groom close beside him—for at first he was subjected to the indignity of a leading rein—he saw a little ragamuffin selling papers, and the sight vividly recalled the mornings and evenings when he himself had pattered through mud and wet, working for the poor children. He dismounted with a sigh, and went slowly upstairs, communing with himself at his loss of liberty, for this was what his new life felt like. Wherever he went, whatever he did, someone always had an eye on him. As for a run in the streets alone, or even a quiet visit to the church, these were impossibilities.

“I wonder if I shall ever really like being a lord,” he thought, as he slowly ascended the grand staircase. “I wonder if they would let me go alone and see them all at North Square sometimes, and if Father Pat and Miss Wright might come here to see me? It is four whole weeks since I saw them, and oh! how long the time does seem!”

He pushed open the drawing room door and went in. Mrs. Moss was seated before a dainty little tea table, and looked up, with a smile, at

the entrance of the childish figure, clad in covert coat, knee breeches, and tiny russian leather riding boots.

"Well, sonny, have you had a nice ride? You needn't change, just this once, as tea is ready. Who do you think has been to see you? And who else do you think has written?"

Uriel threw down his little jockey cap and gold-mounted riding whip, and ran across to the tea table.

"I don't know. Do tell me, quickly."

"Lord and Lady Fairholme and their daughter have called," replied Mrs. Moss, handing him some cards. "I am so sorry they missed you, for they are very nice kind people and were frightfully disappointed that you were out."

"Lord Adair does not remember having had the honour of their acquaintance," laughed Mr. Luton-Hayes, who had entered in Uriel's wake.

The child was gazing, with a puzzled frown, at the cards. Then a light broke over him.

"Oh, how stupid I am! Of course, it is those kind ladies and gentlemen who asked me

to tea, with Father Pat, ever so long ago. Oh, how I wish I had seen them!"

"You shall come with me to call upon them next week on their 'At Home' day, when we are sure to find them," said Mrs. Moss soothingly. "And the letter is from Archbishop's House, saying the Cardinal would like to see you if you will call upon him to-morrow, or the day after, in the morning."

Uriel flushed with excitement. After all, his new burden had in it some compensations. Last time he had seen the Cardinal he was as a mere drop in the ocean, among those too insignificant and numerous for individual notice. Now, apparently, he could see His Eminence alone upon equal social terms.

Mrs. Moss noted the bright colour and rapturous look. Like all Jewesses, she was intensely kind, and the care and study of her husband's little ward touched and absorbed her more each week. She had no child of her own, and Uriel filled a vacant place in her life.

"I think," she remarked, after a pause devoted to refreshment, "it would be nice for you to go alone to see His Eminence. He

would probably much prefer it, especially as you are under non-Catholic guardianship, and it would leave you yourself much freer."

Mr. Luton-Hayes looked up with a smile.

"On behalf of my pupil, allow me to thank you for your delicacy," he said gently. "Lord Adair will appreciate, though, of course, he does not fully understand, it."

"Very well. He shall be driven over in the brougham to-morrow morning."

The excitement of the coming interview served to banish even the unfailing sleep of childhood, and Uriel thought the morning would never dawn. It did, at last, however, after the manner of all equally-longed-for mornings, and in due time he was on his way to Archbishop's House, whirling through the streets behind a handsome pair of chestnuts. It was the first time he had ever been alone in his own carriage, and the fact made him feel older, more grown-up. As he got in, he glanced, this time without a sigh, at the arms emblazoned upon the panels of the doors.

Upon arriving at his destination, he was conducted upstairs to an enormous reception room,

containing a great scarlet throne and canopy which made him feel very tiny. But he was not kept waiting. He had only just time to wonder what it felt like to be on the throne, when a door behind him suddenly opened, and the Cardinal stood before him, smiling radiantly.

"Well, little Cardinal, you have come at last. God bless you, my child," as Uriel went forward to kneel and kiss the episcopal ring. "We will go into my sanctum, where we shall be undisturbed—for a bit, at any rate."

With a sigh, His Eminence led the way into a small room off the Throne Room. He closed the door and turned again to Uriel.

"Well, little cardinal, and how do you like being a lord?" he asked, seating himself in a wooden elbow chair. "Come close to me, and tell me all about everything."

Uriel knelt down, wriggled near to the stately figure, planted his elbows upon the Cardinal's lap, and gazed up into the magnificent face with a smile of utter contentment.

"I like being a lord now, your Eminence. I haven't cared about it much before."

The Cardinal laughed outright.

“ You little courtier! Did you learn to make such speeches in Golden Court? My dear little boy, I can guess just how you feel. It is something—a very tiny something—of what I felt when they took me away to make me a Cardinal. You will get used to it in time, and will grow to love it, not for itself, but for the sake of what you can do for others with it. Just now you are in that most uncomfortable position of being between two stools: you have not shaken off the old life and associations, nor have you yet discovered the abiding compensations of your new position. But, remember you must not be cowardly. Don’t waste time in repining and looking back. Put your whole strength into becoming a true lord, noble and unselfish and self-disciplined. Do you understand me? ”

“ Yes, your Eminence.”

“ Good. Now, how do you like your guardians and tutor? ”

“ Oh, very much! ” exclaimed the child brightening. “ Luton-Hayes is a brick, and I love Mrs. Moss.”

"That's right. And Mr. Moss?"

"Oh, he's awfully jolly, too. But he is away all day, and I go to bed soon after he comes home in the evening, so I don't see much of him. It felt awfully funny at first," he went on, confidentially, "especially at meals. There was such a lot to eat, till I got used to it. At lunch particularly, I used to say my grace after the first course, till I got to remember that there were other things coming."

Again the Cardinal laughed.

"Talking of meals, are you able to keep the abstinence days and get to your other religious duties all right?"

"Oh, yes, my lord. They are like Catholics in that way. They are so good."

"Then is there anything whatever which troubles you, little cardinal?"

Uriel laid his head down on his hands to think. Presently he looked up.

"Your Eminence, only that I should love to see Father Pat and Miss Wright and Mère Dubois. If I might go and see them, or if they might come to see me——"

"I understand. And now, which are you

going to be when you grow up, a lord or a cardinal? I'm afraid you can't be both."

Uriel flushed.

"Oh, a cardinal, of course, my lord."

"Why?"

"Because of the poor children."

"But don't you think that a lord might do as much for them as a cardinal?"

"Why, no, your Eminence. A lord couldn't send a letter to the other little children to make them Crusaders. And he couldn't be a father to all the children like you. They are *your* children."

The Cardinal rose, and his eyes looked strangely bright.

"Lord Adair, you have answered rightly. And remember this: I *am* the father of my children, as you say, the spiritual father, who loves his flock as well, perhaps better than, an ordinary father. We priests do not know what it feels like to be a father in the ordinary sense of the word, and it is difficult to measure degrees of love. But don't forget this all your life: I love my spiritual children well enough to lay down my life for any one of them, if it

would do any good. And remember that you are one of them. I am the father and servant of each. You, my child, have no father of your own. But if ever, through your future life, you want a father, you know where to come and find him."

He stooped, kissed the child on his forehead, blessed him, and led him gently out into the Throne Room again. Then he stood at the door, watching the little figure as it made its way across to the great staircase.

"Poor little cardinal, poor lonely little lord, with your great child heart: God keep you ever strong and pure."

Uriel drove home in a dream of rapture. Only a few months before he had been a poor little boy, with no power, no position. Now he was rich, influential, able to co-operate personally with the Cardinal in the divine work; and then—the touch of those hands, the look in that face, the kiss. The child understood at last that the Cardinal loved him with a love never before experienced in the whole of his short life. People had been very kind to him always, and had loved him well. But it was

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a general kind of love, suggesting no tie of blood or proprietorship. In this great man's love was the ring of despotic ownership—that one thing for which the child had unconsciously craved all his life. To be loved by and really to belong to some one by a definite tie, whether natural or spiritual—that was the one thing wanting. And now, at last, it was found. The Cardinal was really and truly the spiritual father of his flock, with definite obligations to render to them, obligations made more far reaching and powerful when done from a sense of love, and not merely from a spirit of bare duty. All his life, his orphanhood had weighed upon Uriel. All his life he had longed for *a man* to stand to him in place of a father, with definite duties towards him. And now that great treasure was found. But he could not, of course, analyse his new joy. He could only feel it.

Mrs. Moss asked the child no leading questions when he reached home. But she watched the bounding step, the radiant colour, the happy look, and secretly congratulated herself upon her little piece of diplomacy.

On the following Sunday afternoon, Mr. Moss called Uriel into his study.

"Lord Adair," he began, with his kindly smile, "this is to be a formal, business interview. It is true that you are only a child, and, therefore, absolutely in the hands of your guardians with regard to all arrangements, such as the mode of life you follow, the expenditure of your income, and the rest. But, at the same time, you have, like every child, your own ideas about things, and, on account of your past circumstances, you are older in most ways, and younger in the few remaining ones, than your real age. Now, Mr. Abraham and I want to know if there is anything you would like to do for other people, for instance, for the people with whom you have lived until lately. Some of them, of course, have to be rewarded, but we thought you might know of something special that they would each like, and also that it would be of double value if it came from you. Mère Dubois, for instance, what would you like for her?"

Uriel dropped into a chair and thought deeply.

"I think I would like to buy back her own little farm for her, and send her back to Hyères," he said at last.

"Whew! That is rather a large order," said Mr. Moss, taking out his note-book. "However, much will depend on the size and value of the place, and as a mere matter of justice, we owe her for your keep for something like eight years. I will have enquiries made. And Father Lonergan?"

Again Uriel pondered deeply.

"It would be of no good giving him anything for himself, because he would either give it away or not use it at all."

"Well, something for his chapel, then."

"Oh, I know! The thing he most wants is a new high altar. He has been collecting for that almost for years, but the people are so poor he can't get all the money."

Mr. Moss made another note.

"Well, who else?"

"Oh, there is dear Beauty! Oh, please, I should like to give him a nice watch with something written in it from me, because his is so old that it doesn't keep proper time, and he

says he cannot afford another with the little 'un to keep."

"Who else?"

"Oh, dear Miss Wright! I don't know what she wants, I am sure. She always used to say there was only thing she would like, and that was to marry an English lord."

Mr. Moss laughed.

"Is Miss Wright that pretty American teacher?"

"Yes." And Uriel waited as his guardian became rapt in thought.

"Well," said Mr. Moss, rousing himself. "I am afraid we can't buy her a lord. They are rather expensive articles to purchase—even when one finds the private auction where they are sold. As to the other matters, I will make enquiries, and, if they can be obtained at reasonable prices, we shall give them to your friends. We had better leave Miss Wright to obtain her own lord, I think, and, meantime, you might give her a pretty ring to go on with."

Uriel pranced and clapped his hands.

"Oh, you dear, kind, good man. Oh, *may*

it be a blue and white ring, like Miss Fairholme's?"

"Blue? What sort of blue? Sapphire?"

"I don't know the name of the stone. They are the colour of the sky, the colour of forget-me-nots. And blue and white are Our Lady's colours."

"Oh, ah, turquoise, of course. Very well. Turquoise and diamond it shall be. Now, regarding your own personal expenditure, we shall allow you £30 a year as pocket money, which you can spend, without consultation with anyone, upon anything you like. Everything over and above this which you may think you require, you can always ask us for, and we will consider the request. But you must not run into debt, mind. Finally, as you naturally wish to see old friends, like Father Lonergan and Miss Wright, you may have them here to visit you regularly whenever it is convenient for Mrs. Moss, whom you will, of course, always consult before issuing invitations. Mère Dubois you may go and visit as long as she remains in England, provided that Mr. Luton-Hayes accompanies you."

“ Oh, it is like a dream! And may I go and see dear Beauty when I am at Golden Court? ”

“ Yes, and Father Lonerger and the school, too, if you wish. No, don't try to thank me. I know just how you feel, and, after all, it is only giving you your own. By the way, next week I am going to take you to the opening of the Law Courts. It is an impressive scene, for you see, in procession, the whole legal power of England represented.”

CHAPTER X

No fame, were the best less brittle,
No praise, were it wide as earth,
Is worth so much as a little
Child's love is worth.

A. C. Swinburne.

THE opening of the Law Courts was an impressive ceremony which greatly interested Uriel, as his guardian had expected. They arrived in good time at the great hall, and secured front places behind the improvised barrier of rope, whence Uriel could almost touch the legal gentlemen as they walked by. The place was crowded with well-dressed spectators, and an expectant hush fell upon the assembly as the Lord Chancellor appeared at the lower end, preceded and followed by his various attendants. Uriel leant over the barrier, commenting in the piercing treble of childhood.

"How slowly he walks! He doesn't look as if he would ever get here, does he? What a

long wig! Is he the head judge of England, Mr. Moss? Oh, there is another coming behind him! Who is that?"

"That is the Lord Chief Justice, the head of the Bench."

On came the Chancellor, down the long hall between the lines of spectators, looking neither to the right nor left, taking no notice whatever of the occasional murmurs of applause.

"He looks rather cross, doesn't he, Mr. Moss? Doesn't he like being clapped?"

"Hush! Here comes the Chief Justice."

Uriel was silent, and gazed without winking at the ermine, knee breeches, gold lace, and full bottomed wig.

"I like him," he whispered. "He looks kind. Has he got any little boys of his own, do you think? Oh, and who are these?"

"These" were Her Majesty's judges, who followed their chief in couples. They also were in full fig and some were laughing and talking, while others stalked by in dignified silence, taking no more notice of the spectators than if they were non-existent. After them came two men in dull black silk robes and short wigs.

“ Solicitor-General and Attorney-General, heads of the bar,” explained Mr. Moss.

In their rear followed a crowd of men in similar dress, walking in no kind of order, some five or six abreast, some perambulating along sideways, conversing with friends behind them, all laughing, talking, and bowing to acquaintances in the audience, in every way as great a contrast to the stately decorum of the judges as could well be seen.

“ Who are these? ” asked Uriel, in astonishment. “ What a noise they are making. It reminds me, something, of coming out of school.”

“ That disorderly mob is the Bar,” said Mr. Moss with a twinkle. “ Barristers and Queen’s Counsels, woollen gowns and silks. Hullo, Graham, I was just explaining to my ward who all you loose fellows are. He is quite shocked at you,” he added, as one rubicund Q.C. fell out of line to speak to him.

“ Ha, ha! ” laughed Mr. Graham. “ Very different to the Bench, aren’t we, Lord Adair? Though we are not always quite so hilarious as this. Branksome was telling a new story in the

robing room just as we had the word to start, and we haven't recovered yet."

"Was it up to his usual standard?"

"Above it. He excelled himself. Tell you later. Ta, ta, Lord Adair. Sorry we shocked you."

"Another time, when we get an hour off, I will take you to the Chief's Court, and you shall hear him at work, administering so-called justice, as he puts it," said Mr. Moss, as he shouldered his way gently through the crowd.

That afternoon, as it was a whole holiday, Uriel, accompanied by his tutor, set out for Golden Court—his first visit there since he left it for good.

They went in a hansom to within a short distance and then proceeded on foot. Uriel was pale with excitement on reaching the well-known neighbourhood, where his whole life had been spent.

"Oh, there is dear Beauty!" he exclaimed, breaking into a run. Mr. Luton-Hayes good-naturedly resigned himself to the inevitable, lighted a cigar, and began pacing up and down

at a discreet distance upon the opposite pavement.

Uriel tore, as hard as his legs would carry him, to the sooty railway arch, then paused to salute, according to his old custom.

Beauty returned the salute several times in succession, cleared his throat loudly, abandoned his public duties, and in every way evinced much agitation.

"Oh, how are you, dear Beauty?" asked Uriel eagerly. "You look just the same as ever."

"Very well, thank you, sir—I mean my lord. I hope your lordship is well."

Uriel slipped his little hand into the constable's and stroked the blue and white "on duty" band on his coat sleeve.

"I suppose you won't call me 'little 'un' any more now?" he said wistfully.

Beauty again cleared his throat in a harassed manner. "Well, no, my lord. I hope I know my place better than that."

"But I am not two months older than when I went away. And I am still quite small and young."

Beauty removed his helmet and wiped his forehead feverishly.

"Do you miss me?" asked Uriel at last.

"Miss you!"

This was all, but the tone of voice came from the depths of the heart.

"Oh, I want to tell you that I am getting such a jolly watch for you, a gold one. And I am going to have your name printed in it, and I will bring it to you myself when it is done. Now I must go," he added hurriedly, as the inspector, accompanied by his inevitable sergeant, appeared in sight. "I will come soon, when the watch is done. Good-bye."

And he again took to his heels, leaving Beauty saluting spasmodically.

"Well, where now?" asked his tutor with a smile, as Uriel arrived breathless.

"I think to the school."

Directly the child entered the familiar room there was an uproar. Miss Wright greeted him with tears in her eyes, and made no attempt to restore order. The boys swarmed over the desks, and engaged in a lively discussion about Uriel's altered garb, varied by much

wrangling as to whether Mr. Luton-Hayes was or was not the original "toff" who had called at Golden Court that memorable morning.

"Oh, can you come and have tea with me this afternoon, Miss Wright? I do want you, and we can talk then."

"Yes, indeed I can, if five is not too late. Are you going to see Father Pat? I am afraid he is out."

Uriel's face clouded.

"I was afraid he would be. Perhaps he can come to tea to-morrow. I am going to see Mère Dubois now. Don't forget five o'clock, Miss Wright."

"That is the sort of invitation I am apt to forget," laughed the girl as she turned to restore peace.

Mr. Luton-Hayes meekly followed his pupil into Golden Court, and Uriel ran into the dingy house without knocking, dashed straight into the kitchen, and flung his arms round Mère Dubois' neck, almost before she had realised that he was there.

"*Ciel*, it is you, dear little lord? Oh, how bright and well you look! Ah, how often do

I think of you, and how I miss you! And all the time, how glad I am that you are far away."

"I am not. I am often very, very sorry. How is Pierre?"

"Very well, thank you, little lord. But sadder since you went away."

Uriel sighed.

"I am coming again soon. I can't wait longer to-day, because Miss Wright is coming to tea. Give my best love to Pierre."

And out he ran again. With his usual considerateness, he had refrained from saying a word about his pet scheme concerning her future, lest it should prove impracticable.

"It would be so dreadful if we couldn't get it in the end," he reflected, as he danced along. "It is so horrid to want a thing very badly and then not to have it."

"Is that all?" asked Mr. Luton-Hayes, when Uriel rejoined him.

"Y-e-s. That is, the paper shop is on our way, and I should like to see Mr. Brown a minute."

"Was it from here that you used to deliver

papers?" queried his tutor, as they stopped before a small tobacconist's and news-agent's.

"Yes."

Uriel walked in and held out his hand to a respectable-looking elderly man behind the counter.

"How d'you do, Mr. Brown? I hope you are quite well. Have you got a boy in my place yet?"

Mr. Brown hastily wiped his hand down the back of his trousers and became more agitated even than Beauty had been.

"Yes, m'lud, at least, no m'lud. Not to deceive your ludship, I'm taking 'em round myself just now."

"Oh, are you really? Can't you get a boy, then? I am sure there are lots at our school. Thomas Kieley's quite to be trusted, I should think."

Mr. Brown cast upon Mr. Luton-Hayes a look of such anguish that that gentleman felt an irresistible impulse for prompt action.

"Lord Adair, I should like to make a little present to Beauty in the shape of a box of good cigars. I daresay it would be a treat which he

doesn't often get. Now, as you are so much quicker than I am, will you take these to him and be back here in five minutes?"

Uriel fell headlong into the trap, and raced off.

"Lor' bless yer, sir," ejaculated the relieved Mr. Brown, sinking into a wooden chair which stood behind the counter. "I was afraid he was going too far into things. Betwixt you an' me, sir, I've never had a herrand boy before, and never mean to 'ave another. It was jist to oblige my old pal Hanaford, and to please the little 'un, for he wos that set on making money for 'is pore children that it 'ud have bin a sin to disappoint 'im if anybody 'ad 'ad eighteen pence a week to part with. Though, mind yer, sir, 'e wouldn't have valyed it 'arf as much if I'd gived it to 'im. It wos the working fer it that tickled 'is fancy, bless 'is 'art. It was just a put up job between me and Beauty, and that's the truth, sir."

"Mr. Brown, if you will allow me the honour, I should like to shake hands with you. Thanks."

And his visitor walked out, after giving him

a grip that temporarily drove all the blood out of Mr. Brown's fingers.

"Queer ways the gentry 'as, and no mistake," soliloquised the news-agent, gently rubbing his crushed fingers with unqualified satisfaction. "A trifle like that seems to go right to their 'arts, and that chap's bin a boxer, or my name ain't Brown. It's jist a bit too thick though, when a toff like that torked about gittin' good cigars 'ere. Haw, Haw!"

To Uriel's relief, they reached home before the arrival of Miss Wright, who, however, followed them in ten minutes.

"I am so glad you have come," exclaimed Uriel. "And please, will you pour out tea, because Mrs. Moss isn't in?"

"Shall I? Very well."

At that moment the door opened and "Mr. Fairholme" was announced. Uriel gave a shout of pleasure and broke into an eloquent explanation of personalities which caused the three adults much amusement.

"And I like Miss Wright's teaching ever so much better than Mr. Luton-Hayes's, though I like his awfully, too," he wound up.

"I don't wonder at that," said Cedric Fairholme promptly, with an apologetic grin at the tutor, who was laughing heartily.

It was a merry tea party. Sprightly and self-possessed though his teacher had always been, she had never appeared so brilliant as when playing hostess in Uriel's drawing room. After a bit the child dropped out of the conversation to become a spectator.

"I say, this is like old times," laughed Miss Wright, leaning back in the cosy lounge chair. "How many years is it since I had a drawing room something like this of my own?"

"It can't be very many, whatever you may pretend to the contrary," said Cedric audaciously. "Does it feel very awful to—to——"

"To go smash? No, not a bit, after the first shock. I am much happier now than I was in my millionaire days, and far, far stronger in health. It sounds a Sunday-school sentiment, but I can't help that. It is true, when all's said and done, people are happier with an aim in life than they are with pots of money. And there is awfully little, after all, that money can buy which is worth having."

"But mightn't two individuals possess both blessings, I mean pots of money besides an aim in life?" suggested Cedric meekly.

Miss Wright reflected.

"Yes, but all the same, they very seldom do. And, to me, it is such an unfailing satisfaction to feel that I am living on the capacities of my own brain. You forget I am American, Mr. Fairholme, and independence is in our blood to such an extent that some of the advanced ones amongst us would rather live on our own earnings than upon the dollars which we haven't merited."

"No, indeed, I don't forget you are American. I have an unbounded admiration for your nation, and I think you are the very bravest Yankee that ever lived."

For once in her life, Miss Wright was momentarily embarrassed. She had not expected such earnestness in the midst of light banter, and there was something in Cedric's eyes which made her feel a difficulty in meeting them. Any experienced matron would have known what the something was. But as no such lady

was present, it is to be presumed that all four were quite in the dark.

True, it looked a little suspicious that Uriel's tutor lured the child away to the balcony to watch a smart wedding reception at the mansion opposite: a thing which possessed no sort of interest for either of them, though Uriel was too polite to say so. And the extremely confidential demeanour of the other couple during this tête-à-tête was even more suspicious, especially at the moment when Cedric asked permission to examine Miss Wright's new ring, Uriel's present to her, and the way in which the young man found it necessary to hold the small hand during the examination.

"Why don't you wear it on this finger?" he asked at last, in a low tone.

"That is the engaged finger," expostulated the girl shyly.

Cedric looked up again, and the dark brown eyes gazed once more into the black ones until the latter veiled themselves confusedly in a set of long silken lashes.

When Miss Wright finally departed, Cedric

accompanied her, Uriel and his tutor watching the departure from the balcony.

On the face of Mr. Luton-Hayes there shone a strange smile.

"Isn't she nice?" coaxed Uriel, emboldened by this sign of approval.

"Lord Adair, 'nice' is not a word which should ever be used in remote proximity with her. I have seldom seen a prettier girl: never a cleverer or a braver one. No wonder you feel things a bit flat here."

CHAPTER XI

Where children are not, heaven is not,
And heaven, if they come not again, shall be never.
But the face and the voice of a child are assurance of
heaven,
And its promise for ever.

A. C. Swinburne.

IN due course, Uriel's plans for his old friends all came off. Beauty received his watch, Father Pat the altar, and, early in the New Year, Mère Dubois and Pierre said good-bye for ever to Golden Court and went away to sunny France to their own little farm, which time had thus restored to them after long years. The day before their departure, Uriel went to wish them Godspeed, overjoyed to see them gain their heart's desire, but grieved beyond words to lose them.

"What would have happened to me, dear Mère Dubois, if you had not taken such care of me all these years?" he said with his arms round her neck and his soft cheek against her

wrinkled one. "Mrs. Moss says it is thanks to you that I have grown up so strong when my mother was so delicate, and I can never make up to you for all you have done for me. It is jolly that I have been able to give you back your own little bit of land, but that isn't half what you have done for me. You have worked so hard for me and been so worried often. It is so easy to say you want a thing and then never have any more trouble about getting it."

And Lord Uriel Adair, Baron of Porthnedler, sighed heavily, feeling once more en-chained from personal and painful service by the fetters of his wealth.

"Ah, dear little Lord, take the good that God sends you and be thankful. He regards the heart and sees that you would fain *work* for His poor. Take what He gives and pass it onwards to those that need it, and, later on, you will be led to work hard for the poor and helpless in some way better than by working with your hands to make money for them. Remember, there is head work to be done in the years to come when you are bigger."

Uriel's sad little face brightened.

"Oh, I hope so. I never thought of that before. And, dear Mère, now that I am rich I shall be able to visit France and come to stay with you and see where my father and mother lie under the olive trees, as you have so often told me. I promise you I will come, and soon, too."

So he said good-bye and then went out and walked slowly up Golden Court to the Smiths' house. Often and often, he had thought of poor little Alice, but this was the first time he had succeeded in giving his tutor the slip. Now, too, even when alone, it was practically impossible to walk in Golden Court unnoticed, as he once used to, for directly he arrived, heads appeared at the windows to stare at him. He had been afraid, too, to write to Alice, lest her father should get the letter instead, and he still feared to tell anyone, even the Cardinal, of her troubles.

Fortune favoured him at last, however, and in a few minutes he saw Alice herself coming towards him on her way from school.

"Oh, Alice, I have wanted to see you," he

cried, eagerly pulling her into a shadowy corner. "How are you? And how is your father?"

"He hasn't been quite so bad lately. But you're a Lord now, aint yer? Fancy a Lord caring for me!"

"Why shouldn't a Lord care? I am the same now that I always was, except that I care more. Oh, dear little Alice, do, do let me tell the Cardinal and have you taken away."

A cloud of fear darkened the child's face and she glanced nervously round.

"No, no, no. I might git away all right, but he'd find me in the end wherever I wos. You know that. I've told yer often enough. Once I asked him ter let me go away to a school. It was soon arter you went away. And 'e wos that savage——well, there; 'e says he'll swing for me if I ever split on 'im. I must stay. I shouldn't never be safe away from 'im. He won't kill me as long as I stay and keep quiet."

Just then, Uriel caught sight of Mr. Luton-Hayes approaching the entrance of the Court.

"There's my tutor. Run, Alice, or he will see you and ask me all about you. Look, here's

my name and address on this old envelope. You can write to me if I can't to you, and you can come to me any time if he ever gets very bad. Good-bye."

All the way home, poor Uriel turned over the distracting problem in his mind, and was pale and absent-minded the whole evening.

"He feels parting with his foster mother, and no wonder," said Mrs. Moss, after the child had wished them good-night and gone slowly away to bed. "He is the dearest child I have ever seen, so wise, and yet so babyish, with a heart that many a grown man might envy."

"He is merely a typical male child," smiled Mr. Moss. "That is what all man-children ought to be. He is an embryo man with a man's heart and brain already germinating in him. It is entirely against nature when boys are heartless, cruel and greedy. Oh yes, I know there is a sort of idea that everything ignoble is a boy's normal condition. The thing's preposterous. If they are little beasts, it is the result of their early training, which has warped the natural beauty of their natures

instead of developing them. Some silly woman or other has often imbued a boy from his cradle with a thorough and comprehensive selfishness which swallows up every other trait of character, or feeds on it. Yes, it was a lucky day for Uriel when he was left to the care of that wise French woman."

Lent came early that year, and, on Quinquagesima Monday, at the beginning of February, came the Cardinal's annual letter to the children. Uriel received his copy by post, and read it with a tumult of conflicting feelings. Only a year since he had carried that first letter about in his breast pocket! His mind went back with abnormal vividness to each detail of that memorable time. He recollected how Father Pat had found him in the church, how Beauty had suggested the newspaper round, and the first morning upon which he had risen extra early in order to begin his round. Now, he had a smart money box of russian leather, clumped with silver, instead of the old candle box with the slit in the lid. It was funny of the Cardinal to want that box.

Uriel smiled to himself when he thought of

the day he had taken it to His Eminence by request.

"A penny for your thoughts lad," interrupted his tutor, suddenly. "Of course, they are worth more. Don't regard the low sum as an estimate of their value, but merely as a sign of my impecuniosity."

Uriel laughed merrily.

"I was just thinking of the day when I took the old candle box to the Cardinal. I can't think why he wanted it."

"Can't you? Well, perhaps you will, some day. There are still one or two things you have yet to fathom, Lord Adair. And the bottomest depth of a man's heart is one."

"Don't begin puzzling me," coaxed the boy. "And as to-day is a half holiday, oh, do let us go and see the baby elephant again."

"With all my heart. Baby elephants are always congenial to me—much more so than baby humans. Now, come to your studies."

The smart money box continued to fill and, by the eve of Good Shepherd Sunday, it refused to hold another coin. After tea, Uriel took it with him to his own sanctum and fetched

the key from its proper place. Then he climbed into the high window sill and slowly opened the box.

"It's all gold this time, instead of only just being gold like last year. No dear Beauty to count it for me now, and no Mère Dubois and Pierre to help. Oh dear! And wasn't it funny how Beauty said I should have more this time?"

He laid the gold pieces out along the ledge, and then counted the silver into little heaps.

"£15 10s. 0d. It ought to be more. It would have been if I hadn't had to give such a lot of presents and things at Christmas. I shall have ever so much more next year, of course, because by then I shall have a whole year's money."

He jumped down, ran to a drawer, and rummaged about till he found a scarlet leather purse, into which he counted the gold. It was a very tight fit, but he managed to squeeze in also a tiny slip of paper bearing a written inscription. When these arrangements were completed, he ran down to find Mrs. Moss,

who was just preparing to dress for an early dinner before the theatre.

"Dear Mrs. Moss, may I go alone to Archbishop's House to-morrow?" he asked, kissing her hand in his quaint way. "It will be very dull for Mr. Luton-Hayes to come and stand about all that time in a crowd of children. I shall feel such a donkey, too, going with him to look after me. Do let me go alone."

"What is it exactly?" laughed Mrs. Moss. "A meeting of children at Archbishop's House, and you went last year? Oh yes, I think it will be all right. You take an offering, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, you had better go in the brougham. I can't let you run the risk of being highway robbed. Order it when you like, and we will expect you home when we see you. Only you are not to come home alone. So find out what time the meeting will be over and tell Peters."

Uriel arrived at his destination in good time next day, and alighted just as Miss Wright and her boys ascended the steps.

"Oh, how jolly!" he exclaimed, leaping up two at a time, and slipping his hand through the girl's arm. "Do let me come with you this time, too. Shall we be the last again, I wonder? Have you got a lot of money?"

"More than last year, in spite of your absence, Lord Adair. The boys have been bricks, saving up all the year in the money box. No boys' school will beat ours, I am sure."

"Hurrah! I am jolly glad. And I hope we shall see Miss and Mr. Fairholme. He promised he would be there."

That wise Matron, who was always conspicuous by her absence, might have guessed the cause of the splendid rush of carmine which dyed Miss Wright's bright face. Uriel was far too young to know about such things, and the incident was lost on him altogether.

They made their way upstairs, and took their places at the back of the room, which was again crowded. Uriel watched intently as the Cardinal entered, and listened as intently to the address.

When the purse presenting began, Miss

Wright turned suddenly to her small companion.

"You look sad. What is it, dear?"

"Nothing," replied Uriel hastily. "I was only thinking of the difference between this year and last."

"That, surely, ought to make you glad, not sad. Your life has changed like a fairy tale since last Good Shepherd Sunday."

Uriel made no reply, and at last their turn came to kneel at the Cardinal's feet.

"North Square boys? God bless them. Ah, little Cardinal, and is this your private offering? God bless you, boy. Wait, will you, till I have finished? Stand aside by those ladies, and let the others go on."

"So are the sheep separated from the goats," murmured a manly voice behind him. "But by this time next year there will be one more sheep added to this charmed circle, or may I——"

The rest was left unspoken, and Uriel looked up to see Cedric Fairholme, a dark flush on his face, watching eagerly as Miss Wright slowly disappeared from view with her boys.

The cryptic speech conveyed nothing to Uriel, who was then suddenly conscious of a gentle pressure on his arm. Turning, he saw Mary Fairholme.

"I am so glad to see you here again, Lord Adair. I wondered if you would be here as usual this year."

"Oh, I hope I shall never miss," exclaimed the child earnestly.

In a short time the procession of children came to an end, and the Cardinal and his special visitors were left alone in the great room. The reporters retired with manifest reluctance, when they could no longer remain in what was practically a family circle, and several gentlemen, assisted by two footmen, carried off the heavy box, full of bags, to lock it up in the safe till next day.

"That's all right," said the Cardinal, with a sigh of relief. "Come down to my rooms and have some tea, ladies. And you, Cedric. And you, of course, little Cardinal. Where's the scarlet tie this year? Isn't it etiquette for lords to wear ties?"

"Mrs. Moss thought it looked too bright,"

murmured the boy, who was dressed this year in a smart little Eton suit, instead of in his picturesque black velvet.

"Ah, I see. *Noblesse oblige*. You could wear what you liked in Golden Court. Now your existence is more fettered by convention, eh?"

"Mary, you had better pour out for us, if you will, as this is a house without a hostess," said the Cardinal, when they were gathered round an inviting looking tea table in one of the vast lower rooms. "I must go and wash my hands after those damp kisses. I won't be long."

"Yes, that must be awfully unpleasant," said Cedric, feelingly. "Half the time the little beggars don't hit the ring at all, and kiss the hand instead."

"It is such a hideous ring, I don't wonder," said Mary discontentedly. "I wish Cousin Dorotheus would wear some of his others—those with the bright stones—instead of this dull, ugly thing."

"Ugly! Hideous! Mary, it is a priceless cameo."

"I know that. And cameos are the last possibility in the way of hideosity."

Just then the Cardinal re-entered, still gorgeous in gold and moire.

"Here is a little purse which one kind child has brought to match my robes," he remarked with a twinkle.

Everyone looked up, and Uriel recognised his own offering.

"From a little Cardinal to a big Cardinal, a very appropriate gift," continued His Eminence. "I didn't give this one up to be put into the box. I shall keep this purse myself."

"And the contents too?" asked Mary saucily.

"No, not the contents. May I open it, Lord Adair? Yes, I see I may."

There was a breathless pause while the Cardinal turned out the coins and counted them.

"Fifteen pounds, ten shillings. Well done, little Cardinal!"

"How splendid," exclaimed Cedric. "However did you manage to scrape all that together?"

"It is quite easy," answered Uriel slowly. "It ought to be more, really. I have thirty pounds a year for pocket money, and everything else that I need."

"But you must spend nothing whatever on yourself at this rate," exclaimed the Cardinal. "You haven't had time for a year's allowance yet, and you must have a lot of presents to give to other people."

Uriel was silent, and the conversation turned into other channels.

In due time, the visitors took their departure, Uriel being again detained by the Cardinal.

"Now, my child, come and tell me how you are, and let me thank you for your generosity," said His Eminence, drawing the little figure close to his side.

"My lord, I don't feel as if I had done half so much as last year. This year it was easy; last year it was hard. I haven't worked for them. I have simply given what I didn't want."

"Are you quite sure you didn't want it? Spending money, especially when we haven't had to earn it, is a pleasure which even old

men and women don't outgrow. And you are a child, and this was your first year of wealth. Still, I fully understand what you mean, and I fully sympathise. But remember, child, that you have made sacrifices in order to bring me such a sum, and remember, too, that it more than keeps one child. Thirteen pounds a year keeps one whole child, and you are two pounds ten shillings to the good."

Uriel broke away from the encircling arm, and pranced with rapture.

"Oh, not really? Oh, that is too good to be true. Oh, I wish I could know which child! I wish——"

He broke off with a sigh.

"Wish what?" asked the Cardinal, eyeing him keenly.

Uriel flushed up to the roots of his hair.

"A secret from me, little Cardinal? I thought there was perfect love and, therefore, perfect trust between us."

The child's lip quivered at the note of tender reproach in the Cardinal's voice.

"Your Eminence, I have no secrets from you. You know that. This is a secret which

concerns someone else and has nothing to do with me, and I am forbidden by the person to tell."

"Child, I beg your pardon. Tell me your own secrets, but never another person's without permission. Now it is time for me to go, so I must send you away."

CHAPTER XII

What heavenliest angels of what heavenly city
Could match the heavenly heart in children here?
The heart, that hallowing all things with its pity,
Casts out all fear.

A. C. Swinburne.

URIEL was haunted by the words of the Cardinal—"Never tell another's secret without permission." If only Alice would give him leave to tell! He thought and thought, and at last decided to have one final try, one supreme effort. So, with this end in view, he coaxed Mrs. Moss to let him ride over for a visit to North Square by himself for an afternoon.

"I can ride over with Peters early after lunch, and he can bring Brownie back. Then I can be in the school for a bit and go to Father Pat, and perhaps go out with him on some of his rounds, and Mr. Luton-Hayes can call for me at the presbytery in time to get back here

for tea," he pleaded, the day after Good Shepherd Sunday.

"Very well. No doubt you and Father Pat always have plenty to say to each other. Your guardian and I are going down to Brighton for the night this afternoon, and I am lunching with him at the office first, so I shall not see you till to-morrow. Good-bye, and be good till we get back!"

Uriel set out early in the afternoon, with a presentiment that Alice's fate was to be decided, one way or the other, before his return. Peters noticed that he was unusually preoccupied, and seemed, indeed, almost severe as he dismounted at the door of the shabby little chapel.

"His Lordship has got suthin' on his mind," soliloquised Peters, as he rode slowly away. "Never knew him forget to pat Brownie before."

Father Pat was out at a bad sick call, which had come just before his dinner time, the house-keeper said, and he was not yet back. So Uriel made his way to the well-known statue of the Good Shepherd and knelt down before it, as

he had often done in years gone by. He rested his tired little head on the bruised Feet, and thought.

“Last time I was here, I was a poor little boy. Now I am a lord. Some day I shall be a Cardinal and save the poor children. Till then, I have got to save all that come in my way. I am paying for one whole child now. Next year I shall be able to pay for three. Now I have got to save Alice somehow, but I can’t think how.”

He raised his head and looked up at the face of the statue. Again his attention was arrested by the words on the scroll—“I lay down My life for My Sheep.”

“So would I. But I can’t see how I could, or how it would do her any good. Anyhow, I shall have to go now and see, because I must catch her before afternoon school comes out.”

He rose, left the chapel, and hurried up Golden Court. He was conscious of sneaking rather than of walking, for fear of attracting attention.

However, he gained the dirty house without recognition, and ran up the steep stairs. A

knock at the top back room door brought the permission to enter, so he went in.

She started up in terror at the sight of Uriel, who realised at a glance that things had been unusually hard with her of late. She looked almost idiotic with fear and want of sleep.

"Well, dear Alice, I have come, for the last time, to ask you to let me take you away. A very strong gentleman is going to meet me at the presbytery, and you could come with me now and wait safely there till he arrives. Then you could be taken to the Cardinal in my carriage, and he would put you safely somewhere where your father could not find you. Do, do come. I shall never manage to get away again to see you. It is the last chance."

Alice sat down and began to cry quietly.

"I dursnt," she sobbed. "'E's bin wuss 'n ever litely, and I think someone must a told 'im I wos speaking to you that day in the Court, 'cos 'e's bin goin' on about spies."

Uriel stamped in a passion of despairing impotence.

"Hush," cried the girl, checking her sobs.

She listened for a minute, then jumped up, beside herself with terror.

"It's father, oh, it's father! Oh, wot shall I do? Run in the other room and 'ide. Oh, don't let 'im catch yer! 'E'll kill us both."

"I don't care one bit if he kills me," cried Uriel, his face flushing angrily. "And he won't kill you if I am here to take the blame. I am very glad he has come. There *will* be an end of it now."

Alice looked at her gentle little friend, surprised even in the midst of her terror. He was drawn up to his full height, his dark eyes flashing, and he stood haughtily slashing one leg with his little riding switch. He faced the door, and stood waiting while the heavy footsteps came on up the uncarpeted stairs.

As her father entered the room, Alice cowered down behind the bed, then rose, and fled downstairs. Smith paused, in utter astonishment, at the sight of his little visitor.

"I have come here to see your daughter," began Uriel before the man could speak. "I am very glad you have come in, as I wanted to see you. Alice is not happy here

all alone, and I want you to let her go to a school."

Smith still stared speechless for a moment, then broke into a volley of oaths so foul that Uriel turned pale with sheer disgust, though he did not flinch.

"How dare you use such language before a child?" he exclaimed, stepping forward and raising his riding whip. "If you dare to use another bad word, I will cut your face open, you great coward."

Again Smith paused, astounded. Then he sprang at Uriel with a howl of fury, and received a stinging blow on his forehead from the handle of the riding whip.

"Oh, you will, will you? Then take that, you sneakin' little spy. I'll break every bone in your body and learn you ter come 'ere setting my gal on to turn informer agin 'er father."

A few seconds later, the rush of a falling body resounded through the house, and something fell against the door at the foot of the stairs with such violence as to burst it open.

The inhabitants of the room ran out in hysterics.

“ Oh, it's the little lord. 'E's fallen downstairs and killed hisself. Run fer the p'leece, do, somebody; I'm all of a shake. Oh, pore little dear, 'e's dead!”

“ Wot d'ye want the pleece for?” growled Smith from the head of the stairs. “ That's right wot you said. 'E fell down hisself, and wot you want's a doctor, not the pleece.”

Smith was as white as ashes, except for the red weal across his forehead, and his voice shook, but the woman was too hysterical to notice this.

“ Fetch the pleece, someone, quick. There's bin a haccident, and 'e'll send for the ambulance.”

The whole house was at once in an uproar. Two other women came to look at Uriel and lifted him gently on the nearest bed. He was absolutely unconscious, but they could see no mark of injury.

In less time than seemed possible two stalwart constables were in the house, and running

upstairs. One was poor Beauty, who was even paler than Smith.

"What's all this?" the sergeant was beginning, when he was interrupted by an exclamation from Beauty.

"Take that man," he whispered hurriedly. "He's probably at the bottom of it, and, anyway, we've got to know. This isn't a common case. It's little Lord Uriel Adair."

The sergeant turned to look up to where Smith was still standing at the head of the stairs.

"Oh, you're there, are you, Bruising Bill? Home early this afternoon, aren't you? That's lucky, as you will be able to tell us all we shall want to know about this accident. His lordship has been up to see you, I understand?"

"Yes," growled Smith, *alias* Bruising Bill. "He'd bin up ter see my gal. They know'd each other afore 'e was a lord."

"Ah, yes, quite so. And how did this accident happen?"

"'E wos goin' ter run downstairs, and turned ter say goodbye at the top, and slipped over afore anyone could stop 'im."

"Oh, indeed. Must have been in a hurry. Had you been frightening him at all?"

"No."

"Was anyone else up there? Where's your daughter?"

"Downstairs, I s'pose. There ain't no one else up 'ere."

"Oh, indeed. That's a nasty bump you've got on your forehead, Bill. Someone's bin bruising you, for a change."

"Fell off a barge this morning, and knocked myself on the quay."

"Quite so. And here's a broken riding whip at the bottom of the stairs. Did you break that on the quay too?"

"'Taint mine, can't yer see? I s'pose the boy broke it under 'im when 'e fell."

"Yes. Well, I'll trouble you to come along and tell that story at the station. It'll seem almost like coming home to you to be there again, won't it? There's a deal more we want to know yet."

Smith turned from white to green, and slowly descended the stairs. At the bottom, he was taken possession of by another pair of con-

stables, who had been waiting at the entrance. Then the sergeant ran back to Beauty, who was bathing Uriel's forehead with cold water, and trying to force a few drops of brandy through the white lips.

"Anything I can do? I've sent for the divisional surgeon and the ambulance."

Beauty shook his head. "He's past your help or mine," he said, huskily.

"Well, well. Poor little chap. I must run up and have a look at that room."

He stepped softly upstairs, and found Alice by the bed, with her head buried in the clothes.

"H—u—m," said the sergeant to himself.

Then he went over and picked up the terrified child.

"Come, come, lass, don't take on. You're all right and safe with me, and I'm going to take you away to a nice place for a bit. Why, I've got a girl of my own about your age, and precious fond she is of her dad, too. You've no call to be afraid."

In a few minutes the surgeon arrived, accompanied by an inspector. The former made

an examination of the poor little patient, and shook his head.

"He mustn't be left here any longer, without surgical attention, and when he has had it he must not be moved. You had better telephone to Y—— Hospital for a horse ambulance, and send on to his home and tell them to telephone for Blair and Stevens to meet him on arrival if possible. They will want the first children's surgeon and the first spinal specialist in London, for this case, and even then——"

He broke off for a moment.

"Don't make any mistake—Blair and Stevens. See that you have the names. I will wait till the ambulance comes."

A constable was at once dispatched with the messages, and then the inspector resumed a whispered conversation with the sergeant on the stairs.

"What are you going to do with the girl while her father is in custody? Workhouse? No, better not. Send the matron over to Archbishop's House with her. They'll place her at once from there."

"But is she a Catholic?" protested the sergeant.

The inspector smiled grimly.

"Well, if you ask me for strict accuracy, I should say she is a heathen. It's precious little baptism either she or her father have ever had, or I'm a Dutchman. But as I don't happen to have any particulars of any heathen orphanage at this moment, you can take her to Archbishop's House meantime. Lord Adair is a subscriber to their Homes, and they'll take her at once."

"And what about her father?" demurred the sergeant.

"Time enough to think of that when he is at large again," replied the inspector, with meaning. "And even when he is, I don't think you'll find he'll dare to interfere with any arrangement I happen to have made. I don't think so. I know a thing or two about Bruising Bill that no one else much knows, and he knows I know it. It's time that girl was got away from him, and if that's what Lord Adair was after, he was perfectly right, poor little chap. You're a bit of a favourite of mine, as

you know, Jackman, but, even so, in future, don't question my orders as you have done to-day. When I'm unfit for work, it'll be the place of the Commissioner to let me know it, not yours."

The abashed sergeant saluted, and retired in silence to carry out his orders.

Thus the little Cardinal obtained his heart's desire, though he did not know it. For weeks he lay between life and death. Great surgeons visited the darkened room and held consultations over the poor little mangled body, but they all arrived at the same conclusion—Lord Adair was henceforward an incurable cripple, having sustained irreparable injuries to his spine and one hip.

The police also visited the house continually, and had long interviews with the afflicted guardians. The newspapers went mad about the "strange accident to a young peer." Golden Court was in a ferment, and Miss Wright and Father Pat mourned themselves sick.

Smith had been minutely examined at the police station, but was reluctantly discharged

for want of sufficiently suspicious evidence against him, though the Force kept a perpetual eye upon him lest he should, after all, be "wanted" upon Uriel's return to consciousness.

"You see, sir," the inspector explained to Mr. Moss, "until his lordship is fit to throw some light on the matter we are completely in the dark. And even if he can, it is a case of hard swearing, with absolutely no corroborative evidence on either side. His lordship may have taken the false step over the stairs, as Smith says, or Smith may have thrown him down. We cannot tell. We have done our best to hunt up any similar case against Smith, without success. He is, of course, a notoriously quarrelsome man among other men, but he has never been known to lift a finger against a woman or a child. That girl of his in St. Anne's Home swears her father never whipped her; and they examined her carefully for any bruises and so on, when she went in, but found nothing. And there does not seem any motive whatever for his striking Lord Adair."

"It's an awful business," said Mr. Moss

gloomily. "Absolutely awful. If he had been a ward in Chancery, I don't know what might have happened to us. I shall never forgive myself, never. Neither will my wife. The apparent carelessness of the whole household is a disgrace from which we shall never recover. I wish now we had never found the child at all."

"Lor' bless you, sir, you shouldn't look at it in that light," protested the inspector. "There was no negligence whatever. Though, of course, I can understand how you feel, and the feeling does you credit, sir. You forget this wasn't a common case of a young nobleman running off to visit the slums as a stranger. His lordship has lived there all his life, knows everyone in the place. You sent him over in charge of the groom, and arranged for his tutor to fetch him home. As I say, he had lived there all his life, and had never been forbidden to visit anywhere, so it isn't even as if he was being disobedient. It's as pure a case of accident as ever I come across in all my experience, for, as a rule, there's no such thing as accident. Such things can always

be helped. But it 'ud puzzle Solomon himself to see how this could have been helped. I, for one, can't think why he ever went there at all."

"I'm sure it's something to do with this work for the Cardinal, in some way," replied Mr. Moss fiercely. "I blame the Cardinal very much for encouraging children in such ideas. I feel sure it is more his fault than anyone's, really."

The inspector shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, sir, fair play is a jewel, after all. I don't see how anyone can blame His Eminence for starting such a work as that. There's lots of good done by it, and never any harm that I have ever seen. And after all, His Eminence did not tell the children to go into such places. He appointed adults to do that side of the work."

"You seem to know a great deal about it," snapped the unhappy guardian.

"It has been my duty, sir, to find out all possible facts concerning this case, and to try to find some reason for why his lordship went there. The neighbours never recollect that he

was in the habit of visiting the place, and the girl Smith was not a member of his Church and did not belong to his school, so it would almost appear that they do not know each other. On the other hand, his lordship must have had some motive for going, and the only possible one would be with an idea to rescue Alice from something or other which the rest of us don't know anything about. If that was the case, Smith would be angry, of course, and they may have had words—but it is all conjecture, sir, and I hope you will please to let us know directly his lordship is fit to be questioned. And I wouldn't blame His Eminence."

The wily inspector considered it unnecessary to inform Mr. Moss that he had had a personal interview with the Cardinal about the matter, and that His Eminence, with many protestations of grief at the accident, had told the inspector that Uriel had once vaguely mentioned a secret of someone else's which troubled him, but nothing more beyond that. His Eminence was quite unable to gather whether it was anything concerning a child. And, from this

information the inspector had drawn his own conclusions, though, as they were purely speculative, he kept them to himself.

“I have questioned Smith, time after time, and he stands out that Lord Adair had never been there before. And I have seen Alice, and she swears that she never saw his lordship at all in her life. That isn't true, because the landlady saw him go upstairs that day and he and Alice were alone together before the girl ran down out of her father's way. There's something underneath it, or she wouldn't have told that lie. But we shall arrive at nothing, sir, unless his lordship becomes fit to tell us.”

CHAPTER XIII

"If of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,
It must be Heaven indeed."

A. C. Swinburne.

IN due time, nature, aided by science, did her work, and Uriel recovered consciousness. He woke up suddenly one evening, like a child aroused from sleep, and stared in amazement at Mrs. Moss, the nurses, and the doctor, who happened to be paying his daily visit at the time.

"Am I ill? What has happened?" he asked, trying to raise himself.

"You are better now, darling," answered Mrs. Moss, with a smothered sob. "But you must lie still, like a good boy, and not try to get up yet."

Uriel obediently subsided, and made no further remark, while a nurse administered some nourishment.

"I don't feel bad at all," he began, smiling

sweetly at the doctor, who was pensively feeling his pulse. "I am all strapped up, and my leg has gone to sleep, but I don't feel ill."

"You would if you tried to get up," replied the doctor cheerily. "Sick people can be very cock-a-hoop while they are in bed, being waited on hand and foot."

Uriel laughed.

"It is very kind of so many people to take care of me," he said, stretching up to kiss Mrs. Moss, as she bent over him to slip in another pillow. "But how did I get ill like this?"

There was a moment's silence.

"You had a fall," said the doctor, eyeing him keenly. "You fell downstairs in Golden Court, the day you went to see Alice Smith."

A deep flush overspread the pale little face, in which the dark eyes looked so unnaturally large.

"Oh, now I remember. Oh, please, what has happened to poor Alice? And where is her father?"

"Hush, hush, child, you must not excite yourself. Alice is quite safe in one of the Car-

dinal's homes, and she sends her love to you, and says she is as happy as a queen. Her father is very glad she is there, and goes to see her, and takes her sweets every visiting day."

For a minute, Uriel stared at the doctor as though unable to understand.

"Not really? Oh, you are only saying it to please me. You can't mean it."

"Well, I never. That is nice, too. Why should you accuse me of being a story-teller, pray?" exclaimed the doctor, in mock anger.

Uriel slipped a penitent hand into the one that had recently been feeling his pulse.

"It is too good to be true, that's all. But, of course, if you say it really is true—And then I can't understand about her father. Does he see her alone? Isn't she afraid of him any more?"

Mr. Moss and the doctor exchanged glances.

"He sees her alone," replied the latter. "And she is not afraid of him any more. Why do you ask?"

Uriel looked from one to another with a puzzled frown. He was very weak and ill, and returning consciousness was further impeded,

in his case, by the responsibility of Alice's secret. Dimly, it flashed over him that perhaps the whole truth had never come out and that her previous troubles were unknown. And with the knowledge of her secret, there existed also other knowledge far more difficult to conceal.

"I don't know," he sighed at last. "My head is all muzzy."

He was at once forbidden further conversation, and the devoted nurses viewed with some concern the alternate frowns and smiles which chased each other across the pallid face in the shaded lamplight. For over an hour Uriel lay in wide-awake silence, then gave a great sigh of satisfaction, and fell asleep again.

"Poor little fellow," whispered the senior nurse. "He can't remember everything yet, and no wonder."

But the good woman was wrong. Uriel did remember, and with preternatural acuteness. Child though he was, and ill though he was, he had realised at once that a difficult matter was in store for him in the near future: a problem upon which he would have to make up his

mind before anyone had time to catch him unawares with questions.

Then his thoughts flew to his beloved Cardinal, and to Alice, safe at last in the haven where he had so longed to place her. Next day, the doctor was amazed with the improvement in the patient, though he forbade any questions and only permitted a three minutes' interview with the Cardinal upon the sole condition that nothing of an agitating nature was to be mentioned. He did not, indeed, entirely approve of permitting this meeting so early, but Uriel's persistence, and the fact that the boy was surrounded by non-Catholics, induced him to grant permission.

The Cardinal entered softly, with a smile which entirely concealed his sorrow at the first sight of his pet child in such a plight.

"Aha, little cardinal," he murmured, bending over the bed and kissing the white forehead. "You flatter yourself that we have not met since Good Shepherd Sunday. But I have been here to see you time after time, while you were having your sleep out, you lazy little rascal."

Two thin arms encircled the Cardinal's neck and pulled the grand face down till it almost rested on the pillow.

"Have you heard about Alice, dear father?" he whispered.

"Oh, that's it, is it? Yes, of course I have. And seen her, too, and her father into the bargain. Now, then, what do you think of that? Do you imagine that you are the only person who can make converts?"

A quiver of rapture thrilled through Uriel's wasted little body.

"Seen her father? Oh, not really? And is he really all right?"

"Very much so. He is quite a different man. He can never be sorry enough for causing your accident."

Here the Cardinal broke off, untwined the thin arms, and looked searchingly into the dark eyes.

"He can never be sorry enough for causing your accident," he repeated slowly.

Uriel sighed, and turned his head away. The doctor pricked up his ears and watched the pair keenly.

There was silence for a few seconds. Then the small patient spoke.

"I am so sorry for him. Please give him my love, and ask him not to be unhappy. It was not his fault that I slipped downstairs."

"Am I to give him that exact message?" asked the Cardinal.

"Yes, please."

The child lay back very quiet among his pillows, and the doctor stepped forward.

"I am afraid time is up, Your Eminence. The next interview, I hope, may be longer."

So, with a blessing, the Cardinal departed, and, in another week's time, Uriel was pronounced well enough to see the police.

Accordingly, the inspector was summoned, and he arrived, bringing with him a sergeant, who established himself noiselessly at a writing table with papers.

"Good morning, my lord. I hope you are feeling better."

"I am quite well, thank you, Mr. Inspector," answered Uriel, gravely extending a thin little hand for the officer to shake. "How are Alice and her father to-day?"

“ Ah, that’s just what I should like to talk to your lordship about,” said the inspector, accepting a chair from the nurse. “ You wouldn’t know Alice. I didn’t myself when I went over to see her last Sunday. Her cheeks are getting quite fat and rosy, and she is as happy as a bird.”

Uriel dimpled all over his face.

“ I am so glad. You simply can’t think how glad I am. And her father? You don’t think he will change his mind and hurt her, do you? ”

At this moment the door opened to admit Mr. Abraham and Mr. Moss. The inspector turned quickly in his chair, and so far forgot himself as to sign to them to remain unobtrusively in the background, which they meekly did.

“ I don’t think he will hurt her, your lordship, and I don’t think Alice is afraid of him any more. Was your lordship afraid of him that day that you were there? ”

“ Oh, no,” said Uriel serenely.

At this moment the sergeant seated at the writing table began to take notes.

“ Will your lordship tell me just why you

went to see Alice that afternoon?" asked the Inspector in honeyed accents.

"I went because I wanted her to come away with me to the Cardinal, or else, I wanted her to let me tell the Cardinal how unhappy she was."

"Ah, just so. She used to be very unhappy, didn't she?"

"Fearfully unhappy," agreed Uriel. "She didn't believe in God even at one time."

"Indeed. And why was that?"

"Because her father was so cruel to her."

"Indeed? Did he knock her about?"

"N—o—, I don't think he ever knocked her about. She never told me that. He used to frighten her, and that was worse."

"Oh, ah, to be sure. He used to frighten her, and that upset her."

"Yes. Her father used to drink, you see, and that frightened her. And he very often never went to bed, and kept her awake all night. And he used to see snakes on her bed sometimes, and it gave her the creeps, she said. And he locked the door, so's she couldn't fetch

anyone. And he used to tell her he was the devil and would send her to hell if she told anybody. And she really and truly did believe he was the devil for a long time."

Uriel sank back with a sigh. A nurse came forward with nourishment, and the inspector was silent for a few minutes.

"How long has your lordship known of this child's unhappy moral condition?"

"Oh, a long time! Do you want me to count up how long?"

"If you please."

The child performed some mental calculations by the aid of his fingers.

"I began to know her about Lent in last year; not this year, you know, last year. I used to speak to her in the Court; and then I used to go and see her and try to cheer her up. And I asked her to come to the Cardinal, oh, every time I saw her."

"Exactly. You felt that she ought to be taken away from her father. Now, may I ask why your lordship did not tell anyone of this, even the Cardinal?"

Uriel heaved a portentous sigh.

"Partly because she made me promise not to. And partly because I was afraid."

"How afraid?"

"Why, her father always said he would kill her if she told. And I thought if I told anyone, they would take her away, and her father would find her and kill her."

There was another pause.

"And your lordship felt really afraid, for her sake, to do anything?"

"Yes, yes, that was it! Oh, Mr. Inspector, I really believe you understand!"

The inspector cleared his throat sharply.

"I am sure I understand," he said gently.

"Your lordship feared to tell lest you should harm her. You were not afraid for yourself?"

Uriel's great eyes opened wide in astonishment.

"For myself? No. Why should I be?"

"You felt it was one thing to risk your own life but quite another to risk a little girl's?"

"Yes, yes, that was just it."

"And you really honestly believed that Smith would have kept his word and killed her if she had been found out telling?"

“Yes, I was certain of it. And I am half afraid now.”

There was a smothered interjection from the corner, where the guardians were seated. The inspector made a gesture of silence.

“Your lordship need have no apprehensions on that point. Smith is an entirely changed man. I should not tell you so, and His Eminence the Cardinal would not tell you so, if there were any doubt about it. You must not give way to fancies.”

Uriel reflected with a smile.

“Very well, I won’t any more. Only I have been afraid of him for Alice’s sake for so long——”

“Yes, I quite understand. Well, now, will your lordship tell me exactly what happened that afternoon?”

The smile died away, and Uriel became silent, resuming after a long pause.

“I went over to see Alice because I felt so miserable I could not wait any longer. I went up to her room, and began asking her again to come away with me, and then, all of a sudden, she heard her father coming upstairs, and

she was frightened; but I was glad. I thought something might happen if he saw me. I felt anything was better than letting Alice go on as she was. Alice ran out of the room directly her father came in, and I haven't ever seen her again. He came in, and began to swear. That made me angry. They were horrible words. I couldn't understand them, but they made me feel sick. So I told him if he ever said another word like that to me I should cut his face open with my riding whip."

The sergeant looked up quickly, then continued his writing.

"Your lordship said that?"

"Yes. And then he ran at me. And I hit him across the face with my whip. Then I went to run downstairs, and slipped at the top. I can't remember anything more."

"You are sure you did slip and that Smith did not throw you down?"

"Quite sure."

There was a long silence, during which the nurse again administered nourishment.

At last the inspector rose.

"I am very much obliged to your lordship. In a few days I will come again to see if you can remember anything more."

The officer was as good as his word. In three days, he did call again and asked the same questions, twisted into a variety of different shapes. But the answers did not vary a hair's breadth.

Finally he was summoned for a council of war with the guardians.

"Well, gentlemen, you cannot prosecute. Smith was, I think, undoubtedly the cause of the fall, but whether the direct or indirect cause we shall never know. He himself says he was the indirect cause, because if he had been a good father his lordship would never have gone after Alice. And his lordship, you see, admits having struck Smith smartly, but he swears Smith never touched him."

"Oh, Smith admits cruelty to Alice, then?"

"Yes, sir, moral cruelty. He says he has never touched her, and that I believe. The fact is, he was half his time under the influence of drink, and didn't know what he was doing. And he really never knew what she might be

able to tell, so he threatened her and really terrorised her to keep her quiet."

"What those two children must have suffered!" sighed Mr. Moss. "You see, there is no doubt that Uriel was *certain* Smith would murder Alice if he told. Really, it is an awful business. I wish he had never seen the child."

"Yes, sir, I don't wonder you feel that. And yet, after all"—the inspector shook his head and became immensely grave—"after all, sir, the accident led to the girl's salvation and has made a new man of Smith."

"But I don't care an atom about saving the whole world, if Uriel is to be a cripple all his life," almost sobbed Mr. Moss. "They may all go and be damned and welcome, if only I could make that child as he was two months ago."

Still the inspector shook his head.

"Well, sir, it's no business of mine, especially as I don't profess to be a religious man. If I were, I should almost say that souls are worth more than bodies, and that his lordship would think it—will think it, when he knows—well worth being crippled for the sake of

saving two souls—if there are such things as souls. And perhaps his lordship's God—if there is one—may think so too. It's all a matter of how you look at it, sir. But I find I left my notebook upstairs, so, with your permission, I'll just run up for it."

Leaving them speechless at this strange outburst, the officer stole swiftly up to Uriel's room, which was, for the moment, empty of all but its owner. The inspector crossed quietly to the couch and bent over the invalid.

"They are not going to prosecute, your lordship. Smith is all right."

Uriel flushed with pleasure, and clasped both arms round the inspector's neck.

"Oh, I am so glad. How nice of you to come and tell me. I have been so anxious. Whisper, Mr. Inspector. Do you know that I am never going to run about any more?"

"Y—e—, no, your lordship," lied his uniformed friend stoutly.

"Well, I am not. I never knew till yesterday, and then I heard the nurses talking about it when they thought I was asleep."

The inspector gruffly muttered something

about the nurses which luckily his listener could not catch.

“Mr. Inspector, next time you see Smith will you give him my love, and say I am so sorry for him, and ask him not to mind? I asked the Cardinal to give him the message, but perhaps you are more likely to see him than the Cardinal is. Ask him not to mind, and tell him I don’t mind. It is much worse really for him than it is for me. He will feel all his life that it is his fault I am a cripple.”

Then Uriel once more stretched out his hands, and pulled the weather-beaten face down to his level.

“Mr. Inspector, I love you very much. And you won’t ever let them put Smith in prison, will you? Not even if I die? It is all over now, isn’t it? And it would not do me any good, even supposing he had killed me, which he hasn’t. Promise me you won’t let them do anything to Smith, whatever happens. He did not touch me, and even if he had, it would not do me any good if they punished him. Promise.”

And, with his weather-beaten cheek against

the velvet-soft white one, Mr. Inspector so far forgot his official duty, forgot the iniquities of Smith, forgot everything, except perhaps Uriel and Uriel's God—and gave the required promise, in a husky croak.

Then he abruptly unclasped the clinging hands, and ran downstairs.

CHAPTER XIV

The handkerchief on the pillow lay,
But its weary use was o'er;
And he raised it, heavy and wet with tears,
From the eyes that could weep no more.

F. Alexander.

As soon as he could be moved, Uriel was borne away to his Cornish home, where he spent the summer and autumn, lying out all day in the sunshine, looking across the sea, which absolutely mesmerised him with its magic. The big house faced the southwest, and the windows were so extensive that without raising himself from his pillow in bed at night the child could watch the flashing of the Eddystone lighthouse fifteen miles distant, and also the heaving lights of the fishing boats as they lay drifting at their nets, looking like a jewelled necklace on the dark waters.

But towards Christmas time, when the sun seldom showed his face, even in the sunny south, the small patient grew so restless that the doctors advised a return to London.

"He will be among his old friends there. That is what he is pining for," said the kind old village doctor, as he drew on his well-worn driving gloves one morning after a consultation with Mrs. Moss. "And you will get the specialists' advice again, from the men who were with him from the beginning. Perhaps they will order him abroad for the winter."

Mrs. Moss looked up startled.

"Specialists! Do you think he is worse, then?"

"Oh, ah—no, no, no," exclaimed the old man, making hastily for the door. "I have got a very urgent case, so mustn't stay now. I should get him off at once. It is no use letting him fret, poor child."

So the household was removed again to town, and the great specialists came many times. But at last their verdict had to be pronounced and it was broken as gently as possible to the unhappy guardians that the child could not live more than another six months.

"I am grieved to have to tell you," said Sir

John. "But it is no use beating about the bush, and perhaps you may even have suspected the truth yourselves by now."

Mr. Moss hid his face in his hands and groaned aloud.

"I am terribly sorry to have to give you such news," continued the great surgeon, gently laying his hand on the poor man's shoulder. "And, of course, you are at liberty to get any other opinion—fifty if you like—and to try any and every treatment. You may take him for a voyage round the world or leave him here in London; it will be all the same in the end. I will give him nine months at the outside, granted no complications or accidents."

"But what is it?" asked Mr. Abraham in a husky whisper.

"Decline. The shock has simply done for the delicate, highly-strung nervous system. The vital power is sinking like the ebb tide. I have seen it so often in children. He will simply fade peacefully away without pain or distress of any kind, from sheer exhaustion and weakness."

"Do you think he knows?" sobbed Mrs. Moss.

"I shouldn't like to say for certain. My impression is that he does, and that he keeps it to himself for fear of causing pain. Children are marvellous studies; and this child is one of the most marvellous I have ever studied."

Next, the Cardinal came, and the great Sir John was found to have been right. It was months since the two had met, and directly His Eminence entered the room Uriel sat up, with a flush of rapture. The Cardinal sat down on the couch, but could not trust himself to speak, and for a long time the child clung to him, in a happy silence. Then he looked up and saw something which made him flinch.

"Oh, do you know? You see, I shall never grow up after all to be a real cardinal. Do you mind so much as that? I wasn't going to tell any of you, until you guessed it."

"How long have you known it, and who told you?" asked the Cardinal, in muffled accents.

Uriel lay down again, and looked at him gravely.

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"I have known it from the very beginning. Now, then. I wondered how long it would be before the doctors told them. I suppose now that they have told them. But I have known it from that first day when I first woke up."

"Uriel, how could you know? What do you mean, child?"

"I did know," persisted the little cardinal stoutly. "I felt as if the mainspring was broken."

He stopped, and laughed softly to himself.

"Don't you remember when I broke the mainspring of my new watch? Well, I know now just how that watch felt. And, then, too, every day, something seems to be flowing out from me. I can't describe it. And besides, your Eminence, there was Our Lord's side of it, besides the doctors' side."

"What do you mean?" asked the Cardinal, looking down, as through a mist, at the transparent, laughing little face.

"Why, twice, you see, I told the Good Shepherd that I would gladly lay down my life for the sheep. And I felt somehow, when I

went to Golden Court that day, that something extraordinary would happen before I came home again. I couldn't guess one little bit what it would be. I couldn't see how to lay my life down, or what good it would do if I did. But when I woke up after it had happened, I understood it all."

For a long time the Cardinal did not speak. But Uriel did not seem to expect words. He lay contentedly twisting the great cameo ring round and round on its own finger.

"You made your First Communion in the summer at Porthnedler, didn't you?" asked the Cardinal at last.

"Yes, Father. And, oh! dear Father, I do want to be confirmed! And no one but you can do it, can they? Will you confirm me at the new year?"

Of course the Cardinal promised; and so, when all the great city was hidden under a mantle of snow, which made even its darkest places look temporarily white, the strange, mysterious Sacrament of Uncreated Love was administered to the snow-white soul, in the presence of Father Pat, Mr. Luton-Hayes,

Mary and Cedric, and the faithful Miss Wright. Uriel looked so unearthly, robed in white and lying close to a beautiful little temporary white altar, decked with lilies and roses, that Miss Wright felt it would have been quite natural to see a White Dove hovering over him and a celestial flame radiating from the fair anointed head.

"Only one more Sacrament I can have now," Uriel said to his tutor that evening. "I shall never have Holy Orders, as I once thought I should. But, when I have Extreme Unction, I shall have anointed hands then, like a priest's."

Sad news travels fast, and the news of the little cardinal's declining days reached the county of Devon, the land of desolate moor, red sandstone, and sapphire sea, whither "Beauty" had departed, never to return. He had taken his discharge from the police force immediately after Uriel's accident, unable any longer to stand the contact with city crimes. Then, he swallowed his pride, ate humble pie, and returned, a sadder and a wiser man, to the paternal roof, where he was re-

ceived with the rejoicings which patient parents mete out to prodigals. In a short time Hanaford could look back on his experiences as a London constable much in the way that we look back on a hideous dream. The sole tangible trophy of those experiences was the little cardinal's watch, which was destined to be handed down from generation to generation in the Hanaford family, father telling son the story of the child who had given it.

The news travelled, too, to sunny France, where it broke Mère Dubois' heart.

"Pierre, Pierre! The little lord is dying! Hélas, too soon he will keep his promise to come to his father and mother under the olive trees. The good gentleman writes to say that, if the great doctor's words come true, they will bring him here to lay him with his parents. Ah, my bonny little lord!"

And it also reached Mr. Inspector, who received it in absolute silence, patrolling the streets on his duty afterwards like a man in a dream. It was not until he found himself on a bridge looking down at the black, sinister

river, on whose dark and troubled breast the lights of London were fantastically reflected, that the silence was broken by two words—words which, could Uriel have heard them, would have pleased him more than anything the inspector could have uttered.

And the words which he said there alone in the darkness to the night and the river, and perhaps to the listening angels, were:—

“POOR Smith!”

Mr. Inspector did not know, though the angels did, of a strange scene which was being enacted that very night a little lower down the course of the sad, dark, sin-stained river, where its foul waters crept past one of the great London hospitals—a scene which had reached its climax almost as the words “Poor Smith” left his lips.

For many weeks one of the beds had been filled by a patient for whom from the first there had been little hope. But there was such a strange fascination about the man’s unutterable despair that the doctors, as doctors sometimes do, prevaricated a little and pretended they were going to benefit the sufferer by some

vaguely-hinted-at treatment later on, when he should be strong enough to bear it.

"I haven't the heart to turn the poor devil out," remarked the senior house surgeon one evening to a junior. "He'd commit suicide or some thing, I believe, if he were cast adrift from his last anchorage; and, besides, it's really a most remarkable case of complete cardiac collapse in a healthy man of that class and such powerful physique. Never would have believed, if I hadn't seen it, that mental causes could produce such a result."

So was the "poor devil" allowed to remain, and he lay there, week after week, speaking to no one, looking at no one, accepting all offices with a brief word of thanks, and weeping sorely to himself night and day. He was a powerful man, but the weeping was not noisy; far from it. They were the tears of despair, silent, helpless, hopeless. Vainly they tried to rouse him, to cheer him, even to irritate him. He lay there inert, scarcely ever raising his head, struck down almost lifeless by some overwhelming sorrow which was rapidly eating his life away.

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So things went on until the New Year. And suddenly one evening he pushed up the handkerchief which usually lay across his eyes, and raised his head. The nurse went quickly forward, glad to see any voluntary movement in this heart-breaking patient.

“Do you want anything?”

“Yes, lady. I want ter see a priest. No, not the regular chaplain,” as the nurse turned away to send the usual notification, “some-one, a priest that is, that I once knew. Can’t I ’ave ’im? Am I obliged to ’ave the reglar one?”

“No, no,” said the nurse hastily, horrified by the glare of despair from the blood-shot, tear-stained eyes. “You shall have whom you like. I will manage it for you. Tell me his name and address, and I will write it down and send at once.”

She did so, and in an hour’s time Father Pat and Smith met face to face.

A faint ejaculation escaped the old priest as he recognised his strange penitent, and he stood in silence while the thoughtful nurse quickly erected two screens which shut the bed

off from the rest of the ward, leaving them in perfect privacy.

Then the old priest sat down by the bed, and took hold of the limp hand.

"My poor fellow, you are in trouble. Can I help you?"

At this the heavy head sank again on the pillow, and once more the tears began to flow, the slow, silent, hopeless tears of despair.

"Wot can the likes of you do fer the likes of me? 'Ave you 'eerd the news about the little lord? 'E's a dying."

A frozen horror suddenly paralysed the old priest. At last, without a word, he understood, and instantly all the instinct of the "alter Christus" rose within him to battle for this soul.

"My son, despair is the sin of the coward or the proud. You are neither. Cast out this unworthy feeling. I, man though I am, can do much for you; your Saviour can do everything."

"Ah, and can even 'E give me back the life wot I took that day? Can 'E make that child wot 'e was the day I laid my wicked 'ands on

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'im, and give 'im back his life and strength agin? You know 'E can't."

"God could do it if He wished, but He does not want to do it. And if He did, the child would not wish it. Why should he, with his faith, wish to exchange earth for heaven?"

A groan broke from the sufferer.

"'Eaven? Wot's the use of talking to such as me about 'eaven?"

Gently, but firmly, Father Pat lifted the tear-wetted handkerchief from the hopeless eyes, and bent over the pillow.

"Smith, rouse yourself. Lift up your head and look at me."

The man obeyed. He raised himself slightly, and looked up into the tender old face with an expression that sent the tears glittering into the priest's own eyes. For a moment they could not speak, so they gazed into each other's faces without a word—the transparent, spirituelle countenance of the "alter Christus" and the sin-seamed, passion-scarred face of the despairing sinner.

"And, while you look me in the face, answer me this question truthfully—do you

believe I would damn you if I had the power to?'

An expression of horror crossed the penitent's face.

"No fear," he replied huskily. "I should think you never wanted anyone damned in your life, not even me. You damn anybody? Not likely I should believe that."

"Very well," said Father Pat, with a ring of triumph in his voice. "And are you going to make out that your Saviour is harder-hearted than I am? I would not damn you—would He?"

The head dropped back again on the pillow, and once more the tears began to flow. But it seemed to Father Pat that there was a life and a hope now in them.

"Smith, my poor fellow, forget yourself for a minute, or, rather, look at yourself from an outside point of view. Try to fancy what it is to anyone with a human heart to see you in this awful trouble—trouble all the more unbearable because it is of your own making. Think of little Lord Adair——"

A quiver passed through the recumbent form.

"It would break his heart to see you as you are now. And do you seriously think that God's heart is smaller than that child's?"

Still Smith kept silence, but he looked up at the priest with a kind of dumb pleading, as though asking for more. So more was given to him. Never in his life had Father Pat, eloquent though he was, poured out such eloquence, such love, such passionate yearning as he poured out over that sin-stained soul. The holy fire that burnt in him, the fire that is lighted in every priest's soul by Holy Orders, was so flaming hot that it seemed almost palpable. At last the poor wretch raised his head.

"Father, I b'leeve you. You couldn't lie. I b'leeve there's even 'ope for such as me, if you say so. Tell me what to do, and I'll do it—anything you wish. I'm going pretty fast."

Gathering from the dying man that he had not, probably, been baptized, Father Pat briefly gave him the necessary instructions,

and prepared for the administration of the Sacraments as prescribed by the Church for such cases. First he heard the confession of that sinful life; never had he listened to one more painful, or touching him so nearly. And the sight of the agonising remorse put a final touch to the sadness of the scene. With groans the man poured forth sin after sin. Last of all came the true story of the Little Cardinal's fall.

"'E come in that day," murmured the husky voice, "like an angel o' light to save my gel from the 'ell I was giving 'er. And then I come in with filthy language, and 'e stood up there to me alone—me, wot strong men were afeerd of, and 'e 'it me acrost the face with 'is whip, and serve me right. I deserved to 'ave bin killed out an' out. And I rushed at 'im, and took 'im by 'is little white neck, and threw 'im backwards down the stairs—me, a strong man, and 'im a child——"

Here the voice died away into an inarticulate murmur, and tears of agony welled out once more.

The priest waited but a few seconds to pour

forth again some words of hope and encouragement, then seeing that the dark river was very near the far-off, mysterious sea, he called for water, quickly administered conditional baptism and after it conditional absolution. Last came the anointing of each sin-stained sense, and as he purified the horny hands which had done the horrible deed, tears from the priest's own eyes mingled with the holy oil.

When everything was over, he sat down again and took the newly anointed hand within his own.

"Are you happier now, my poor fellow? Can I do anything more for you?"

There was a long silence, during which Father Pat sat, crucifix in hand, praying silently while the river ebbed away.

Suddenly, with a supreme effort, Smith roused himself.

"When you see 'im, sir, give 'im my love—and say I die 'appy, thanks to you; and that I bless 'im with my last breath."

He fell back, and Father Pat knelt down, clasping the cold hands and murmuring the

words of the last prayers. In a few minutes there was a gasp, a slight quiver, and the tortured soul had fled.

The priest remained kneeling while he said the *De profundis* and *Requiem aeternum*. Then he rose, closed the bloodshot eyes with his pure hands, and passed out from between the screens at last.

A nurse came forward at once.

"He is dead, sir, I suppose? We saw he was going fast, and as there was nothing to be done for him, poor fellow, and he seemed eased at last, we left you quiet. It's the saddest case I have ever seen in my life."

"As long as you live—and you are a young woman—you will never see such another," acquiesced the priest, as they stood looking down at the still, worn face. "I'm taking away this handkerchief," he continued, lifting it from the pillow. "It is a treasure. Good-bye, nurse, and God bless you. I'm responsible for the funeral, remember, and I'll come in to-morrow about that. Good-bye."

The girl brushed away a tear, then looked in concern at the transparent white face.

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"You look half fainting, sir. Won't you take something before you go?"

Father Pat shook his head with a gentle refusal, and then made his way home, worn out with the struggle of the terrible but consoling night's work.

Next day he went to Uriel and demanded a private interview.

The child seemed unusually bright, and Father Pat stood looking down at the laughing face for a long time in silence. He knew the Little Cardinal's secret at last. He knew that Smith had been guilty and that Uriel had shielded him. But the priest's lips were sealed. He could never tell the boy that he knew all at last.

"Little Cardinal," he said at last, "I have got great and solemn news for you. Poor Smith is dead. He died last night, and I heard his confession, baptised him and anointed him before he passed away. He sent his love to you, and told me to say that he blessed you with his last breath. Those were his last words."

At this moment, the door opened softly, and the Cardinal entered.

Father Pat went on his knee and kissed the episcopal ring.

"Good day, Your Eminence. I have come here with a very solemn message. Smith died last night in X—— Hospital, and I baptised him before he went."

The Cardinal stood stock still with astonishment.

"Thank God," he ejaculated at last. "Poor fellow! Fancy his being dead!"

Then he turned to Uriel.

"This is good news for you, my child. Humanly speaking, if it had not been for your solicitude for Alice and your accident there, poor Smith would have died as he lived."

"Yes, my lord, I am happy," replied the boy gravely. "It is even better than the news that Alice was safe in the Home."

"Was he conscious and fit to talk?" asked the Cardinal curiously. "Fit to make his confession?"

Father Pat's face wore an impassive calm.

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“ He was, and there was time to anoint him afterwards, too.”

The Cardinal looked hard at Father Pat, at the worn, transparent face, the shabby, threadbare, green-black suit, the bent shoulders, and the strip of white Roman collar. Then he looked down at his own cassock, edged and girdled with the weighty scarlet, fingered the pectoral cross with the massive chain—and sighed.

“ Ah, the weight of the scarlet,” he said, in a low tone. “ How I envy you obscure parish priests, with your direct and continual contact with sinners. *I* can’t get near them. What *I* wouldn’t have given to have been in your shoes last night!”

Father Pat repressed a slight shudder. And, once more in his long life, thanked heaven for the seal of confession.

Uriel continued very grave till after Father Pat had taken his leave. Then he stretched out pleading hands to the Cardinal.

“ I should like to go to confession to you,” he coaxed.

The Cardinal looked at him keenly, then

sat down beside the couch and gave the blessing.

"Father, I want to confess telling lies about Smith," the boy began slowly. "It wasn't true what I said at the examination. Smith did touch me. He took me by the neck and threw me down. I think he meant to kill me."

Seasoned confessor though His Eminence was, and though, too, he had often suspected something of the truth revealed in this confession, he could not repress an exclamation.

"My dear little child! Why didn't you tell me before?"

Uriel hung his head.

"Father, I was afraid you might make me speak out. And that they would hang Smith or put him in prison, if I die. I knew you couldn't tell if I told it in confession. But I was afraid to tell outside. Then, though you couldn't tell, I was afraid you might make me tell, even when I told you in confession. Once, when a boy at our school stole some apples, the priest made him buy some more and give them back. He made the boy give them back through him. I thought it might

be like that. I thought you might order me to tell."

"My child, I understand your feeling. And I am glad and sorry to know the full truth at last. But how did you manage about confession?"

"I didn't go till after the examinations were all over," said Uriel, wearily, "and then I simply confessed telling lies. The priest didn't ask me what they were about. And I was never asked anything more, outside, either. So I didn't have to go on telling lies. But you can't ever tell now, can you, Father? Not even if I die?"

"Never," replied the Cardinal, gravely.

Thus did His Eminence and Father Pat learn the truth at last—the one by the confession of the victim, the other by the confession of the guilty man. The Cardinal guessed that Father Pat knew the full truth from hearing Smith's confession. Father Pat guessed that the Cardinal had heard Uriel's, since he himself had not done so. But there could be no speech between them on the matter *usque ad mortem*.

By Easter, Uriel was dying fast. There was nothing to be done for him, and nothing, either way, much mattered, the doctors said, except to give him as happy an end as possible.

In Holy Week, therefore, Uriel at last got his anointed hands, of which he was inordinately proud, making everyone kiss them, the Cardinal included.

But by Easter Sunday the brightness vanished. The child was gloomy and downcast, and fretting himself to a shadow.

"What is the matter with him?" asked Sir John, a little severely. "This is quite wrong, you know, Mrs. Moss. He has no business to be depressed."

"He wants to go to the children's meeting to-day fortnight at Archbishop's House," explained Mrs. Moss, stifling a sob. "He has not missed yet; and he says it will be his last, and he would rather die than miss it, because he has got the best present of all this year to give to the Cardinal, and no one else can give it for him. We have told him it is entirely impossible."

The great surgeon looked grave.

"What is the present?"

"No one knows, and he won't tell. But if he thinks that no one else can give it, and is bent on going, it doesn't much matter whether it is a reasonable longing or not."

"Let's see. That unfortunate child has been rescued since the last Children's Sunday, hasn't she?"

"Yes."

"And I hear her father made a wonderful end in X—— Hospital in January?"

"Yes, he did."

The doctor stroked his moustache doubtfully.

"I can partly understand the child's feelings," he said at last; "and I don't see why it should be entirely impossible. If he is told he may go, he will rally and be his own bright self again. You can hire one of those sling-couches, and have him driven there. And if the Cardinal would let him sleep there a couple of nights, that would minimise the fatigue. Fatigue is the only thing to consider now. There is no pain, you see, to contend with."

Sir John himself made it his business to call

on the Cardinal, and prompt permission was at once given. So the Little Cardinal had his wilful way, and when the noisy, happy, healthy children again filled the big room, there was a little couch behind the Cardinal's chair, where the ladies were sitting. Nearest to the couch were two in mourning, Mary Fairholme and Miss Wright, now Lady Cedric Fairholme. Her father-in-law had died a few weeks after the marriage, and Cedric was now the reigning lord.

"It is nice," murmured Uriel, as Cedric greeted him with a friendly squeeze. "Miss Wright always wanted to marry a lord, and I always wanted her to. And now she has done it."

"Yes, she has done it," smiled Cedric. "And, as I swore last year, this charmed circle holds one more member. No more herding with the common throng for you, Phil. Won't it be sport to see your old boys come along? The Cardinal will be nowhere this year."

"The sight of them will awaken in me deep regrets," replied her ladyship, with ponderous sadness. "Already I wonder if I shall ever

live a *grande dame* life without being bored to death. And——”

“Don’t believe her, the little humbug,” interrupted Mary. “She revels in the whole thing, simply revels.”

“It is funny, you know,” resumed Uriel. “Last year you were Miss Wright, and the year before I was little Uriel Adair. Next year——”

He broke off with a look in his face that made Lady Fairholme turn hastily aside and bite her lip till the blood came.

When the children had all departed, the Cardinal rose and turned sorrowfully to the pet lamb of the flock.

“Well, little Cardinal, and what about your offering? You said you had a lovely one for me, didn’t you?”

“Yes, and so I have,” exclaimed Uriel, stretching out his arms to be lifted up. “Take me up. No, of course you won’t hurt me. Nothing hurts now. Have you got me tight?”

And he lay laughing up into the Cardinal’s face.

“Well, Father, don’t you see? This is

my offering; me, my life, for your child, Alice."

Lady Fairholme turned away again, but this time the tears would come, and two great ones—neither hers nor Uriel's—dropped on the child's face.

"I am so happy. I have never been so happy in my life. Give my love to Father Pat, and Mère Dubois, and dear Beauty, and Mr. Inspector. Next Good Shepherd Sunday——"

These were the last words the Little Cardinal ever spoke. The supreme effort to keep up until the great day had been too much for his almost exhausted vitality, and he fell suddenly into a dead faint from which he never recovered. By midnight that children's fête day, he was safe with the Good Shepherd.

The Cardinal's wishes were respected, and the poor, wasted little body was made ready for its last sleep under His Eminence's stately roof.

"Leave him here until he goes away to his father and mother under the olive trees," he pleaded with the guardians. "He would have

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preferred it. And robe him in my own colour for his last sleep. Not usual? No; but humour me, this once. I shall never ask you again."

So it was done. A little scarlet cotta, such as is sometimes worn by altar boys, was procured, and for several days the child lay smiling as though well pleased. His friends came to visit him, among them Father Pat, who brought a crumpled handkerchief, which he gently laid underneath the fair head for a pillow.

It was the handkerchief embalmed by the repentant tears which had saved poor Smith's guilty soul.

Then, at last, came the day when they were to close the coffin and take the child away; and, that evening, the Cardinal went in alone to say good-bye.

The little figure lay there, robed in scarlet, against which the hands, face, and hair showed with unearthly purity. The great, dark eyes were closed, and the black lashes rested peacefully on the waxen cheeks. Scattered all round were pure white lilies, and on the mo-

tionless breast, over the great child-heart, lay the Crusader's medal, the badge of the Children's Crusade, with its figure of the Good Shepherd and its plain cross on a shield.

With a smile sadder than any tears, the Cardinal looked down at the dearest of his flock, then stooped and, for the last time, kissed the smooth, untroubled brow.

"Good-bye, Little Cardinal, good-bye. You were spared the weight of the scarlet in life, but you merited the reward of the scarlet in death, for you have done, Little Cardinal, what I have not done, "You have laid down your life for the sheep."

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